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ABSTRACT

There is a crisis in the black family; at its core is the inextricable linkage of low educational achievement, high unemployment levels, and limited opportunities for access to stable jobs at adequate wages. This report is directed at an examination of the causes and the consequences of this essentially economic crisis, providing a brief historical overview of major social and economic trends affecting black families in New York State. The following major categories define the underlying trends in New York: (1) poverty; (2) low income; (3) unemployment; (4) lack of family formation because of limited economic options; and (5) inadequate human services in areas such as education, health care, child care, foster care, and housing. Each of these is explored in detail. Data on the following are provided: (1) causes of the crisis; (2) blacks in the labor market; (3) the labor market and family heads; (4) occupations, industries, and geographic location; and (5) the labor market status of household heads. Black families face discrimination daily. General recommendations are made as are recommendations in the following areas: (1) welfare reform; (2) incentives for businesses to provide jobs; (3) public sector job incentives; (4) training and education; (5) income; (6) affirmative action; (7) human services; (8) foster care; (9) child care; (10) housing; (11) programs to address crime related behaviors; and (12) community based initiatives. Statistical data are included in an appendix. Data are presented on 20 tables. A six-page list of references is included. (BJV)

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THE BLACK FAMILY IN NEW YORK STATE

CURRENT CRISIS/ RECENT TRENDS

REPORT
TASK FORCE ON THE BLACK FAMILY

GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR BLACK AFFAIRS
AUGUST 1987

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June 5, 1987

Honorable Mario M. Cuomo
Governor
State of New York
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am pleased to forward to you the report of the Task Force on the Black Family: Current Crisis/Recent Trends. The report represents the work of the Task Force as well as the Advisory Committee to the Task Force, whose members brought insight and focus to our deliberations.

The economic crisis of Black families aspiring to achieve middle class status in New York State and across the nation is highlighted. The report examines the linkage of low educational achievement, high unemployment, limited opportunities for access to stable jobs at adequate wages, and the effects of racial discrimination, all of which help to define both the causes and the consequences of the crisis. Attempts were made to dispel some of the myths which surround many of the popular explanations for the current crisis among Black families. The report concludes with a summary of recommendations to address the educational, employment, and economic disabilities of Black families and seeks ameliorative strategies from government, the private sector, and the Black community itself.

We appreciate this opportunity to serve the people of the State of New York, and sincerely hope that this report will be a useful contribution to your continuing efforts to improve the lives of the Black families of New York State.

Sincerely,

Joyce F. Brown, Ph.D.
Chair, Task Force
on the Black Family

TASK FORCE ON THE BLACK FAMILY

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Dr. Hill was the principal researcher for the Historical and Recent Trends section of the report. Dr. Burbridge was the principal researcher for the section on the Causes of the Crisis.

Support for the Task Force was provided by James E. Capel, Assistant Commissioner of the New York State Division of Human Rights, and Ms. Charlotte Jefferson of the New York State Division for Women. Special recognition must be given to Dean James Murtha and Dr. Audrey Blumberg of the Office of Institutional Research of The City University of New York, for their generous contribution of time and expertise in data compilation and analysis; and to Dr. John Mollenkopf, Dr. Roberta Trachtman and Mrs. Bernice Douglas for their keen editing skills and willingness to read and comment on the drafts. Similarly, the contribution of The City University of New York is noteworthy in light of the tireless clerical and computer support which was always available. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey graciously hosted the first meeting of the Advisory Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this report, a brief historical overview of major social and economic trends affecting Black Families in New York State provides some perspective on recent national and state trends relating to Black families. The Task Force on the Black family reports that there is a crisis in the Black family, and that at its core is the inextricable linkage of low educational achievement, high unemployment levels and limited opportunities for access to stable jobs at adequate wages. The report is directed at an examination of the causes and the consequences of this essentially economic crisis.

Data on families in this report are based on the Census Bureau's classification, which defines"families" as comprising two or more persons living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage or formal adoption. However, the Task Force believes that the definition of families should be expanded to include extended family members, whether related or not, who live in separate households but still perform vital family functions. Unfortunately, such extended family members are excluded from Census Bureau data on families.

The Task Force has identified five major categories which define the underlying trends in the current crisis affecting Black family life in New York State: Poverty, Income, Unemployment, Family Formation, and Human Services.

Poverty. In New York State, in contrast to national trends, poverty increased among Black families. While the proportion of poor Black families in the United States fell from 30% to 27% between 1969 and 1979, poverty rates among Black families in New York State rose from 20% to 26%. Thus, by 1979-1980, Black families in New York State were about four times as likely as White families to be poor, while families headed by Black women were about twice as likely to be poor (44%) as those headed by White women (24%).

The number of Black families on welfare increased nationally as well as in New York State during the '70's. While the proportion of all Black families in the United States on welfare increased from 18% to 24% between 1969 and 1979, the proportion of all Black families in New York State on welfare rose from 20% to 25%. However, while welfare recipiency increased among Black female-headed families nationally from 38% to 42%, it slipped among Black female-headed families in New York State from 43% to 42%. Contrary to popular belief, by the end of the decade, three out of five families headed by Black women, nationally as well as in New York State, were not on public assistance. The rise in poverty among these one-parent Black families is mainly due to the fact that the women are three times more likely to be jobless today than they were over a decade and a half ago. However, the working poor also experienced increased economic hardship. One-fourth of the 1.3 million Black female family heads working full-time during 1984 received wages that kept them below the poverty level.

Income. While the real income of Black and White families in the United States increased by 5% and 6% respectively, between 1969 and 1979, the real incomes of these families in New York State declined by 10% and 2% respectively. During this same period in New York State, the proportion of Black families with income under $10,000 increased from 31% to 39%, while the proportion of Black families with income of $20,000 and over held at 31%. The ratio of Black to White family income in the United States remained at 61%, yet the income ratio between Black and White families in New York State fell from 65% to 60%.

Unemployment. Black heads of household became disproportionately unemployed or underemployed during the 1970's and 1980's because of several trends in the American economy: back-to-back recessions, business closings in central cities and relocation of jobs to the suburbs and abroad, the shift from higher paying unionized manufacturing jobs to lower paying non-unionized service and high tech jobs, and double digit inflationary spirals. These trends were compounded by the "last hired, first fired" syndrome which has severe repercussions for Blacks. Between 1970 and 1980, the jobless rate for Black family heads more than doubled. Research findings are cited which describe a consistent correlation between marital instability, and employment and economic difficulties.

Family Formation. Limited economic and employment options resulting in chronic unemployment, create serious disincentives for marriage and/or family commitments. The poverty of young Black males is associated with and exacerbates the poverty of the women they might have married. The 1980 Census revealed that 42% of Black families are married couples as compared to 63% of White families, and Black families are three times more likely than White families to be headed by a single person. Between 1970 and 1980, the proportion of female-headed households in New York State increased by about one-third among both Blacks and Whites. Despite this common trend, Black women are much less likely to marry or re-marry. Consequently, Black families remain female-headed for longer periods of time than White families. Research shows that Black women (particularly young Black women) face a shrinking pool of "marriageable" (i.e. employed) Black men, and that the changing economic status of Black men seems likely to be related to the rise in Black female-headed families. The report shows the influence of these combined factors on the rate of teenage pregnancy in the Black community.

Human Services. The need for specific ameliorative measures to improve services in the areas of: Education, Health Care, Child Care, Foster Care, and Housing are described. A 1986 study of school dropouts in New York State, found that 53% of Black youth did not finish high school. In New York City, where Blacks and Hispanics comprise three-fourths of the student population, official dropout rates for the total school system range from 28% to 31%. The high number of Black youth without adequate educational and vocational skills have ominous implications for the future viability of Black families.

The increase in the number of working mothers during the '70's has exacerbated the need for child care, especially in Black families. Two-thirds (65%) of Black wives with children under age 18 in New York State were in the labor force in 1980, compared to only half (47%) of White wives. Among single mothers, 54% of Black mothers were in the labor force, compared to 61% of White mothers. Even among wives with pre-school children under age 6, 60% of Black mothers in New York State were in the labor force, compared to only one-third (34%) of White mothers. And among single mothers with pre-school children, the same proportion of Black mothers (41%) as White mothers (41%) were in the labor force.

Without a standardized and monitored Statewide child care system aimed at providing equal access to quality, affordable care for all children in the State, opportunities for increased employment and education cannot be utilized by large numbers of Black families.

Although the number of children in foster care declined sharply over the past decade, the proportion of Black children in foster care increased markedly. Between 1977 and 1984, the total number of children in foster care in the United States dropped from 500,000 to 250,000. But over that period, the proportion of Black children in foster care grew from 28% to 34% of all children in foster care. In New York City, the number of children in foster care fell from 24,000 to 16,000 between 1979 and 1984. However, by 1986, it rose to 18,000 and about two-thirds of the remaining children are Black. Between 1970 and 1979, the number of Black children doubling up or living in the households of relatives, rose from 1.3 million to 1.4 million raising the proportion of informally adopted Black children from 13% to 15%. For White children the proportion increased from 3% to 4%. Thus, the Black informal adoption network - i.e. the extended Black family - far out-distanced the formal foster care system in finding placement for Black children.

The lack of affordable housing has become a major problem for thousands of Black and low-income families across the nation. But the housing crisis is particularly severe among Black families in New York State because of the disproportionate number of renters. While 44% of all Black household heads in the United States were homeowners in 1980, only half as many (22%) Blacks in New York State owned their homes. But real income fell among Black homeowners (-8%) as well as Black renters (-23%) between 1970 and 1980. Since the rent of Black households rose much faster than their real income, the rent-income ratio of Black households in New York State rose from 22% to 29% over that decade.

The report describes the behavioral correlates of lives lived by poor families, isolated in inner city communities with limited employment opportunities, inequitable wages, poor school environments, and inadequate health care. While criminal activity and drug dependency are described, research is cited which

documents a strong relationship between violent crime and delinquency, and high rates of unemployment, poverty, welfare dependency, family instability, and low levels of educational and vocational skills.

Causes of the Crises. In examining the causes of the current crisis in the Black family, various explanations which have been given for the rise in Black female-headed families (demographic change, liberal social-welfare and income-transfer programs, the culture of poverty, the low male-to-female ratio, labor market problems) were explored. Although many cite the rise in Black female-headed households as a cause of the higher Black poverty rate, the Task Force asserts that this phenomenon is actually the result of economic factors.

It is the view of the Task Force that the inter-relationship between the economy, education, conditions of entry level work, and welfare continue to be a clear force in the formation and the stability of Black families. While other explanations for the rise in Black families headed by women may identify contributory events, the labor market explanation is the most fundamental. Data is cited which indicates that poverty and income instability have resulted in marital instability and out-of-wedlock births.

Blacks in the Labor Market. There are also different explanations for the labor market problems of Blacks: some emphasize low skill levels of Blacks, while others emphasize labor market discrimination. While the Task Force agrees that Blacks suffer because of lower education and skill levels, discrimination is still an important barrier to Black progress in the labor market. Thus, discriminatory practices exacerbated by structural changes in the economy, have a severely negative impact on Blacks.

In exploring the labor market problems facing Black families and Black household heads the Task Force points out that in New York, the difference in the percent of the population that is employed (employment-to-population ratio) is greater between Black and White youth than for the nation as a whole. In 1985, the employment-to-population ratio of White 16-19 year olds was 2.5 times that of Black youth in New York (38.9% of the Whites are employed, compared to only 15.5% of the Blacks) and 2.0 times that of Black youth nationally (48.5% compared to 24.6%). The Black youth unemployment rate was 42.5% in New York, which is higher than the national rate of 40.2%, while the rate for White youth in New York was slightly less than the national rate.

The data demonstrate the difficulty faced by Black youth in New York seeking employment. This has serious implications for family formation if, in fact, a poor labor market history is important in explaining the formation of female-headed households among young Blacks. When these households are formed among the young, it is usually the result of an out-of-wedlock birth, rather than separation or divorce.

The Labor Market and Family Heads. In New York, Black household heads have lower education levels than White household heads. However, when controlling for education of the head-of-household and family type, Black households still earn less than White households. Education levels and family composition are insufficient explanations for Black-White differences in earnings.

One notable exception is in a household where no spouse is present: Black and White households headed by a woman have very similar earnings, regardless of education of the head. These earnings are very low. Nevertheless, it is important to note that there are many more Black families whose head is a single woman earning these low salaries, than there are similar White families.

Occupations, Industries and Geographic Location. Blacks make up 12.3% of the New York State labor force but a full 33.2% of the New York City-New Jersey SMSA. The overwhelming majority of Blacks in the State work in New York City. In the New York SMSA, Blacks are concentrated in the occupations and industries most vulnerable to structural shifts. This is particularly true for Black males who rely more heavily on the blue collar occupations and the manufacturing industries currently leaving New York City, only to be replaced by service industries requiring large numbers of professional workers. Even the service occupations within these service industries are not absorbing low-skilled Black men. While Blacks, particularly Black women, are found in service occupations, they are mostly in the low-wage service jobs. Those service industries showing the greatest growth in New York (the information processing services and finance, insurance and real estate) rely heavily on highly trained professionals. Thus, while these service industries are showing the greatest growth in New York, Blacks continue to participate in their least desirable, least mobile jobs. Blacks have much lower representation in administrative, professional and technical occupations. The distinction between Black participation in service occupations and Black representation in the fast growing service industries, is clear.

Occupational segregation by gender as well as racial discrimination is a problem for Black females. In 1980, fully one-third of Black and White female heads-of-household were in administrative support occupations: secretaries, typists, receptionists, and clerks. While these female-intensive occupations suffered less from structural change than the blue collar jobs where Black males are concentrated, they are relatively low-paying fields. Often the wages are insufficient for a single mother to keep her family out of poverty. Occupational segregation contributes to the poverty of the Black females who head households.

Labor Market Status of Household Heads. Black household heads have higher unemployment rates than White household heads, even when controlling for education. Further, although unemployment decreases with education, the percentage difference between the unemployment rates for Black and White male heads-of- household actually increases with increasing education.

The unemployment rates of Black female heads-of-household are higher than those of similar White females, and higher than rates for Black and White male heads-of-household. Black female heads-of-household between the ages of 18 and 24 have the highest unemployment rates of all; even when college educated, the unemployment rate for this group is in two digits.

In spite of high unemployment rates, Black household heads have labor force participation rates as high as White household heads. Similar patterns can be found when controlling for family type and presence of children: Black household heads have similar or higher labor force participation rates as White household heads, but higher unemployment rates.

However, data on persons, rather than household heads, show Blacks with lower participation rates than Whites. Therefore, while Black household heads show the same or greater labor force attachment than White household heads, this is not true when focusing on the entire population of Blacks and Whites (16 years old or over). This suggests that high unemployment has discouraged labor force participation among those who do not head households, which in turn discourages the formation of households among this group.

Given the movement of blue collar jobs out of the central city, and the low salaries paid by many of the white collar and service jobs in which Blacks predominate, Black heads of household face a continuing problem of high unemployment and low earnings.

Among the report's conclusions is that the challenge to the State of New York is to embrace an economic development policy based on full employment programs designed to reduce the disjuncture between education, curriculum content, training for the transition from school to work, and jobs. Further, policies that can benefit Blacks must not only emphasize efforts to end discrimination and increase education and training opportunities, but specific attention must be directed to the mix of jobs available in urban areas, particularly in New York City.

The Task Force points out the underlying discrimination which Black families face daily. The report describes the impact of social attitudes and expectations on individual productivity and behavior, and reinforces a call for government to exercise its responsibility to promote affirmative action through its function as regulator, employer, and purchaser, to influence labor market conditions.

Recommendations. The report concludes with a series of recommendations to address the educational, employment, and economic disabilities of Black families and seeks ameliorative strategies from government, the private sector, and the Black community itself. Among the highlights are:

- that a Family Impact Statement be formulated prior to the adoption of any statewide projects, programs, policies or legislation, by which an assessment of the impact of said programs on all families, including nuclear and extended Black families of various structures, will be determined.

- that the State should further reinforce its pro-family policies by requiring that each State agency and department be required to undertake a comprehensive assessment of its current programs and policies to determine their impact on Black families. Further, recommendations should emanate from this undertaking as to specific agency initiatives for new services, policies or programs needed to strengthen the Black family, as well as recommendations for mitigating negative outcomes of current policies. Similarly, the State should advocate, through business and labor, and by enforcement through State agencies, support of child care initiatives and the expansion of family-oriented personnel policies (such as flexible time schedules).

- that the State of New York indicate by policy and by example its pro-family stance. The centerpiece of the State's efforts to ensure pro-family policies must be a two-pronged concerted effort to achieve:

    (a) welfare reform

    (b) full and fair employment, with an emphasis on unsubsidized employment.

Welfare Reform

- that the State of New York should assume the leadership in urging passage of Congressional legislation to:

    (a) modify the strict eligibility requirements for AFDC-UP to insure that most needy two-parent families qualify for benefits, and

    (b) mandate the AFDC-UP program for all 50 states.

- that a system of public supports as well as education incentives must be developed for pregnant teens and teenage parents.

Full and Fair Employment Opportunities

Incentives for Business to Provide Jobs

- that the State should provide tax incentives to businesses who hire the unemployed.

- that private sector employers be recruited to provide internships to high school and college students.

- that the State utilize tax dollars for the research and development necessary to maintain those industries in New York State that are now considering relocation.

Public Sector Job Incentives

- that a public jobs creation program be developed if there are not sufficient jobs for the trained work force.

Training and Education

that a variety of training and education policies are necessary in order to develop programs that will provide low skilled Blacks with an opportunity to achieve upward mobility, such as:

- adult education programs to help those who dropped out of school or who need vocational training;

- training programs for dislocated workers whose skills have been made obsolete by structural changes in the economy;

- training programs for single mothers that will lead to jobs that pay enough to make them economically self-sufficient;

- work experience programs for those with limited or no work experience to provide them with easier entry into the labor market.

Income

- that New York State should lobby for and encourage an increased minimum wage.

- that a strong stand be taken on equal access and pay equity for women in New York State. Efforts should be made to insure that women have access to traditionally male jobs and that those who are in female-intensive occupations receive salaries commensurate with the work performed.

Affirmative Action

- that the State establish higher goals and give greater priority in its affirmative action plan for recruitment, employment and promotion of racial minorities with special emphasis on Black males.

- that the State Department of Civil Service should be allowed to establish an eligibility pool of protected class members from each examination promulgated, or, be permitted to waive the one-in-three rule upon the written request of an agency head who certifies inability to meet agency goals and timetables under normal procedures, in order to increase employment opportunities and career development for Blacks in State government.

- that efforts of private industry to recruit and train minorities be supported.

Human Services

- that health benefits be maintained for workers in low wage jobs which do not provide sufficient income to purchase private coverage.

Foster Care

- that: (a) special financial incentives be provided to child welfare agencies to expedite the placement of minority children in need of foster care and adoptive homes; (b) these agencies be encouraged to set first priority for placement with a member of the child's extended family network.

Child Care

- that the State has an obligation to increase access to affordable quality child care for all parents in need of such care. This will increase the likelihood that parents will be able to, and therefore will, work.

- that New York State can be an advocate for further changes in the tax laws which would enable families to take advantage of a refundable child care tax credit.

Housing

- that the State develop an affordable housing program where the title of government owned land is conveyed,and tax abatements and other incentives are provided to developers and builders. The goal of the program is the construction of housing with affordable rents for families whose income is within 249% of the poverty standards for New York.

Programs to Address Crime Related Behaviors

- that more programs targeted to minority populations be implemented to assist parents in developing parenting skills on how to administer effective discipline that avoids excessive punishment;

- that health education curricula extending from elementary through high school include teaching children how to manage hostility and aggression by nonviolent means and to develop creative methods to channel children's energies into education, work, community projects, and recreation;

- that agressive and antisocial behaviors in children are often associated with later delinquency and violence. Consequently, improved mental health interventions are needed. Similarly, improved mental health services are necessary to assist Black families in coping with stress;

- that programs to reduce chemical dependency should be incorporated into all strategies utilized to educate Black families to deal with stress.

Community Based Initiatives

- that specific action be taken by the State to ensure enhanced support of activities serving the Black community by community based organizations.

INTRODUCTION

In November, 1985, Governor Mario M. Cuomo, by Executive Order #66, established the Governor's Advisory Committee for Black Affairs. As part of the Committee, the Governor stipulated that a Task Force be established to study the Black Family, and he designated a Chair of the Task Force.

The Task Force membership was drawn from the overall Committee. In an effort to broaden the base of expertise bringing insight to the work of the Task Force, an Advisory Committee was established. The Advisory Committee was a valuable resource in helping to identify the key issues which face the Black community and which affect the Black family in particular.

The charge to the Task Force was to address the unique concerns of the Black family with particular emphasis on households headed by Black women. The Black family has become the focus of much research and attention throughout the nation. The work of the Task Force had to be guided by that existing body of research, with special consideration given to the specific concerns of the Black families of New York State.

It is not possible to examine family issues without discussing all areas of critical concern which face the Black community. However, in an effort to avoid duplication of the work evolving from the sub-committees established by the Commission, vis-a-vis Black Affairs, the Task Force divided its work into sections describing the past and current trends which contribute to a crisis in the Black family.

There is a complex matrix of variables that affect Black families, particularly female-headed families. While the report describes many aspects of Black family life, the Task Force focused on the impact of economic concerns and male joblessness, on family formation and stability in the Black community.

The recommendations emanating from that primary focus are viewed as beginning steps to create a context for effective functioning and self-sufficiency for the Black family in the next decade.

The Task Force struggled with the confining parameters created by static data sets and linear descriptions which, by design, cannot capture the dynamic, fluid interrelated phenomena which are part of family life. For this reason the recommendation

calling for a required family impact statement as part of all statewide initiatives and policies is important. It is this thrust which will reach the comprehensive and interrelated nature of both the problems and the solutions for Black families.

The Task Force recognizes that these issues cut across and affect all families. However, while the nature of the problems may be universal and affect families in general, the specific and documented impact of racism and sexism exacerbates the conditions under which Black families must function. These factors intensify the often difficult realities of everyday life for Black families.

The members of the Task Force and the Advisory Committee have worked to develop a report that will be useful in understanding Black family life in New York State, and which can be used in the design and implementation of strategies and policies to enhance the functioning of strong, intact, nurturing Black families.

DATA SOURCES

The statistics appearing in this report are the latest data available for the units of analysis examined. For example, although the bulk of our data on Black families in New York State are from the 1980 Census, some of the labor force data on Black workers in New York State were based on the United States Census Bureau's Current Population Survey for 1985. Similarly, in order to present comparable data at the national level, most of our national data on Black families were also based on the 1980 Census. Other data sources did not have sufficient information on the State of New York, or did not have information specific to families as opposed to individuals. At times we also cite 1984 income and poverty data on Black families from the Current Population Survey of 1985. Since certain data needed for this study were not available from published 1980 Census reports, the Task Force ordered special tabulations based on the 1980 Census Public Use Microdata Sample for New York State.

Consequently, data on families in this report are based on the Census Bureau's classification, which defines "families" as comprising two or more persons living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage or formal adoption. However, the Task Force believes that the definition of families should be expanded to include extended family members, whether related or not, who live in separate households but still perform vital family functions. Unfortunately, such extended family members are excluded from Census Bureau data on families.

Altogether four sources of data were used:

1) Published census data were used for both 1970 and 1980 to examine trends in the characteristics of New York Black families. Published 1980 census data were also used for information on Blacks in the New York labor market, in the New York metropolitan areas, and in the nation as a whole.

2) Tabulations were also made from 1980 Census Public Use Microdata tapes. (The computer runs were made by The City University of New York Data Service.) Use of these tapes allowed examination of the labor market characteristics of heads-of-household (Black and White) in New York, while controlling for educational attainment.

3) Labor market data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), for 1985, were also used to provide more recent information. However, this data is for

individuals, rather than for families. So while more current, the BLS data is less precise than the census data. As will be seen, data on household heads produces different results when comparing the labor market participation of Blacks and Whites, than does the data on individuals.

4) To add greater depth to the analysis a wide range of statistics were culled from journal and newspaper articles, New York State agency reports and other published materials, and were used when possible.

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THE BLACK FAMILY: ASSIMILATION AND ALIENATION

The topic of the Black family in White America continues to generate curiosity and concern.

The discussion of the Black family revolves around questions of viability, self-perpetuating poverty, and systematic discrimination resulting in a marginal status vis-a-vis the larger society.

The statistics clearly continue to depict blocked access to middle class status for most Blacks, in spite of increased Black educational achievement levels, more white collar employment, some assimilation into predominantly white communities, and a growing Black consumer market.

Discussion of the Black family typically concerns itself with the clear schism within the Black community between those "making it" on the fringes of the middle class, and those who have dropped through the safety net to form a sector of society commonly referred to as the underclass. The Task Force believes that the questions posed along this continuum are more distracting than informative. The questioners seem to imply that Black middle class persons arrive at that station simply by deciding to embrace middle class values and to pursue the requisite skills for the tasks of achievement. The unstated corollary is that lack of will relegates all other Blacks to an underclass or lower class existence. Consequently, much research on the Black family has concerned itself with problems of socialization.

Some of this research questions whether the behavior of Blacks that seems to militate against incorporation into mainstream American society results from basic inadequacies in the cultural and social evolution of Blacks, while others suspect that such behaviors are simply the result of social conditions imposed by that society. The latter view holds that the problems of the Black family and the Black community are directly traceable to the racism inherent in a White controlled society which has denied Blacks access to the skills and forces which fuel the country.

Focusing on which culture is to be blamed for poor socialization, however, allows both views to move us away from examining the deeper economic roots that underlie Black family problems. The Task Force believes that Black family formation and structure are bound to the economic status of the Black population. Any discussion of socially or culturally induced deviant behavior can be relevant only in the context of

a changing American economy, income distribution, and family adaptation.

The Task Force on the Black Family believes that there is a crisis in the Black family, and that at its core is the inextricable linkage of low educational achievement, high unemployment levels and limited opportunities for access to stable jobs at adequate wages. Thus, the causes and the consequences of the crisis require analysis of its economic impact.

It appears that the crisis has not been mitigated by economic or public policy, and, in fact, can be traced to the disproportionate effect of economic changes and public policies on Black and White citizens. Political, economic and educational policies often secure the position of the privileged even as those same policies function in a manner indifferent to the conditions and opportunities available to the poor. Policies and practices which continue intact in spite of their disproportionate impact on different sectors of society are among the contributing factors to family fragmentation. Their outcome is reflected in the correlates of social marginality and family adaptation found in the Black community.

It is the conviction of the Task Force that Black families share the same hopes and dreams as White families - that of attaining middle class status in America. It is imperative therefore, to examine the underlying and contributing factors which prevent many, if not most, Blacks from reaching this status, which would help to sustain, support, and nurture an intact nuclear family.

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, Black families reflected alarming increases in unemployment, poverty, single parent families, teenage pregnancies, out-of-wedlock births, substance abuse, homelessness, school dropouts, mental illness, incarceration, and the need for foster care. Since New York State has the largest number (2.4 million) of Blacks of any state in the nation, the problems are magnified, just as they are in New York City, which has the largest concentration (1.9 million) of Blacks of any city in the United States. In their examination of the relationship of poverty, welfare, and work, the New York State Task Force on Poverty and Welfare (1986) asserts that: "family structure changes have been driven by economic and attitudinal changes" (p.29).

In this report a brief historical overview of major social and economic trends affecting Black families in New York State provides some perspective on

recent national and state trends relating to Black families. Next, we critically evaluate the tenability of several popular explanations for the current crisis among Black families. Specifically, we examine the roles of the culture of poverty, welfare attractiveness, lack of education, declining job opportunities, and racial discrimination. We conclude that the latter three factors have more influence than the first two. Finally, we offer several recommendations for strengthening Black families within the domain of government, the private sector, and the Black community.

HISTORICAL TRENDS

Since their arrival in 1624 in New Amsterdam as slaves and indentured servants of the Dutch, Blacks have regularly experienced serious crises in New York State. In his 1901 study of Blacks in New York City, W.E.B. DuBois underscored the persistence of the "race" problem:

> From the earliest settlement of Manhattan, when the Dutch West India Company was pledging itself to furnish the new settlers with plenty of negroes, down to 1900, when the greater city contained 60,000 black folk, New York has had a negro problem. This problem has greatly changed from time to time (p. 2).

Initially, the "problem" was slave revolts in which many Whites, as well as Blacks, lost their lives, especially in 1721, 1741 and 1803. Following the abolition of slavery in New York State in 1827, however, a long series of racial confrontations erupted between the 10,000 newly-freed slaves and the waves of newly-arriving immigrants--particularly those fleeing from Ireland because of the potato famine of the 1840's. During the latter half of the 19th century, both groups were concentrated near New York City's Times Square area, a section between 20th and 63rd Streets west of Sixth Avenue then known as "The Tenderloin", an impoverished red-light district.

Most racial attacks were against Blacks who worked in or traveled through White neighborhoods. Racial battles occurred so often near 62nd Street and Amsterdam Avenue (where Lincoln Center is currently located), that this area was known as San Juan Hill (Osofsky, 1968). The most devastating race riot in New York took place in July, 1863, as a protest by Irish immigrants against conscription policies that allowed the wealthy to escape the Civil War draft. Displacing their aggression to Blacks, mobs of immigrants participated

in widespread assaults, looting, and arson, inside and outside Black neighborhoods. This week-long "Draft Riot" resulted in over 200 deaths, mostly Blacks, and large-scale property destruction.

Although periodic racial clashes continued into the 20th century, with notable rioting in New York City in August, 1900, none were as severe as the Draft Riots (Osofsky, 1963). Nevertheless, these racial assaults contributed to an exodus of Blacks from central Manhattan to Harlem, in upper Manhattan, and to Brooklyn. Large-scale displacement of Black families was also stimulated by major construction projects, particularly the building of Madison Square Garden and theatres located off Broadway.

Prior to 1890, most New York Blacks were Northern born, since there was relatively little migration of Southern Blacks to the North. However, the economic opportunities created by World War I brought increased numbers of Southern Blacks to the North. This northern migration "aggravated" the race problem in New York City by sharply increasing the number of displaced emancipated Black agricultural workers from rural areas. Between 1890 and 1910, the City's Black population almost quadrupled - from 24,000 to 92,000. By 1910, over half of the Black population was Southern born (Osofsky, 1966). During World War I the number of Southern Black migrants increased due to a revitalized Northern industrial economy, labor shortages resulting from the suspension of European immigration, and the large number of White American men who were fighting abroad.

While New York was experiencing an influx of Black migrants from the South, large numbers of Black immigrants arrived from the British West Indies. Between 1900 and 1920, the number of foreign-born Blacks in the United States rose from 20,336 to 73,803, with 60 percent of them arriving to live in New York City. Overall, the West Indian Black immigrants were more urbanized and more highly-educated than Southern Black migrants, and intragroup conflicts occurred frequently (Reid, 1939).

According to Gutman (1976), by 1925 about one in four Black men and women aged fifteen and older was an immigrant. An essential difference distinguished the two groups: immigrant men outnumbered women in all but one (15 to 24) age group. However, among the native Black migrants, women predominated. Therefore, the West Indian and native Blacks had opposite over-all adult sex ratios.

The percentage of unskilled laborers and service workers fell significantly between 1905 (86%) and 1925 (72%). About one in five West Indian men was a skilled worker. A lesser percentage of native Black men had skills. Still, in 1925 nearly nine in ten Manhattan Black men were either unskilled laborers, service workers, or skilled workers (Gutman, 1976).

In 1924, most immigration from the Caribbean was curtailed by the racially restrictive National Origins Act, and did not resume in significant numbers until 1965 when the United States immigration laws were liberalized. By 1980, almost one-fifth (or 388,643) of the Blacks in New York State were foreign-born, compared to only three percent (or 815,720) of all Blacks in the country.

The first major growth of the Black middle and working class in the North came as a result of World War I. For the first time, Black men and women were able to obtain employment in semi-skilled and skilled occupations that had been closed to them prior to the World War. Although many were displaced from these jobs at the end of the war, the 1920's was still a prosperous decade for Black families. It was no coincidence, that the "Negro Renaissance," an era of significant expression by Blacks in the arts and literature, occurred during this period in many Northern cities, especially in Harlem in New York City. Nevertheless, since Blacks were disproportionately concentrated in low-paying domestic, service, and laborer jobs, the proportion of Black middle-class families was - and still is - somewhat smaller in New York City than in other large cities, such as Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. (Frazier, 1957).

In 1905, the typical New York City Black household had at its head a poor male unskilled laborer or service worker. Overall, about six in seven New York Blacks lived in a household that had at its core two or more persons related by either blood or marriage. Nearly half of these households contained just members of a nuclear family, and two in five were augmented households. Except where subfamilies were present, the extended household usually included one relative and rarely more than two (Gutman, 1976). (Sub-families consist of a family living with one or more families in the same household.)

According to Gutman (1976), "the changing composition of the household, a fact of great importance in describing the adoptive behavior of early-twentieth century southern black migrants to New York City, was

not accompanied by any increase in the male-absent household or subfamily" (p. 454). In 1925, six of seven New York City Black households and subfamilies contained either a husband or a father. Despite the low economic status of most males, the adverse over-all sex ratio, the great number of unattached lodgers, and the increased importance of the augmented household and the subfamily, the percentage of Black women in all age-specific groups heading male-absent households and subfamilies either remained constant or declined between 1905 and 1925. Three percent of all households and subfamilies were male-absent and headed by women under thirty. One percent of all households and subfamilies were male-absent and had in them three or more children (Gutman, 1976).

In summarizing this era vis-a-vis nuclear and female headed households, Gutman states:

> At all moments in time between 1880 and 1925 - that is, from an adult generation born in slavery to an adult generation about to be devastated by the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the modernization of southern agriculture afterward - the typical Afro-American family was lower-class in status and headed by two parents. That was so in the urban and rural South in 1880 and in 1900, and in New York City in 1905 and 1925 (p. 456).

The economic status of middle and working class Black families received a severe setback during the Great Depression of 1929. A decade later, despite the New Deal programs, Black and White workers were still struggling to recover from the effects of this unprecedented slump. In New York State in 1940, Black men and women had unemployment rates of 31% and 21% respectively, while White men and women had jobless rates of 17% and 14% respectively (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963).

It took World War II to bring this nation out of its most severe economic decline and to facilitate a sharp growth in the number of middle and working class Blacks. In 1946, Robert Weaver observed that during that war, Blacks "secured jobs at better wages and in a more diversified occupational and industrial pattern than ever before," (p. 306). For example, between 1940 and 1960 the proportion of Black women in domestic work in New York City declined from 64% to 25%, while the proportion in white collar jobs increased from 8% to 25%. Over the same period, the proportion of Black men in white-collar and craft jobs in New York City rose from 26% to 34%. In addition to the wartime labor shortages, these occupational gains for Blacks resulted from intensive pressures for equal employment

opportunity from civil rights groups and the threatened March on Washington in 1941; the establishment by President Franklin Roosevelt of a Federal Fair Employment Practice Committee (FEPC) that year; and the growth of labor unions.

The economy of the metropolitan area following World War II was labor intensive. Textile manufacturing and factory production grew at an extraordinary rate. The decade after the end of World War II was an era of "affluence" for White Americans and a period of significant economic gains for Black Americans. By 1950, the unemployment rate in New York City for Black men and women had dropped to 12% and 8%, respectively. Further, wages for Black workers grew from 60% to 70% of those for White workers. However, between 1953 and 1961, the economic strides of Black families were seriously undermined by three back-to-back recessions: 1953-54, 1957-58 and 1960-61. The widespread unemployment of Black husbands due to these periodic slumps led to family strife and marital dissolution. Interestingly, as Rainwater and Yancey (1967, pp. 66-67) describe, the 1965 Moynihan Report is one of the few analyses of Black families to examine systematically the role of recessions in inducing the growth of single parent families:

> The fundamental overwhelming fact is that Negro unemployment, with the exception of a few years during World War II and the Korean War, has continued at disaster levels for 35 years...
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> Since 1929, the Negro worker has been tremendously affected by the movements of the business cycle and of employment. He has been hit worse by declines than Whites, and proportionately helped more by recoveries.
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> From 1951 to 1963, the levels of Negro male unemployment was on a long-run rising trend, while at the same time following short-run ups and downs of the business cycle. During the same periods the number of broken families in the Negro world was also on a long-run rise with intermediate ups and downs....
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> The conclusion from these and similar data is difficult to avoid: During times when jobs were reasonably plentiful...the Negro family became stronger and more stable. As jobs became more and more difficult to find, the stability of the family became more and more difficult to maintain.

Contrary to its own analysis, the Moynihan Report de-emphasized the role of the economy. Instead it asserted that no amount of gain in the civil rights area would overcome the "tangle of pathology" emanating throughout the Black community. The thesis was that the experience of slavery had forced a matriarchal structure upon Black family life and this had sufficiently emasculated (in a socio-psychological sense) Black males to create a culture of lowered expectations and achievements dominated by female-headed families. The combined impact of slavery, segregation, insufficient coping mechanisms for emancipation, and continued discrimination resulted in a repertoire of behaviors insufficient to overcome the poverty and deprivation inherent in Black life in America.

Slavery, as the cause of female-headed families, has been widely repudiated by many historians, notably Blassingame (1972), Genovese (1969), and Gutman (1976). In-depth analyses of plantation and census records from 1850-1925 revealed conclusively that the Black families who were closest to slavery had the highest proportion of two-parent families. These studies of Black family structure in rural vs. urban areas demonstrated the nexus of environmental and economic impact on Black family formation. In rural areas, particularly in farm tenancy systems where stable family labor units were the foundation of the production unit, two-parent families prevailed (Fogel and Engerman, 1974, and Mintz 1975). In the urban areas, the phenomenon of Black female heads-of-household began to expand (Gutman, 1976, p.444 and 634). It appears that two-parent units were not supported by the environment and its economic needs, and in fact were negatively affected by the lack of economic supports provided by the environment (DuBois, 1909). However, Gutman (1976) is careful to catalogue the slow growth of female-headed households and points out that high mortality rates among Black males (cf. Furstenberg, Hershberg, and Modell, 1975) should be studied for its contributory impact on this phenomenon. Further, Gutman (1976) disavows the notion of overwhelming Black family disorganization as a result of either slavery, poverty or urbanization (p.432 and 942).

Many years earlier, Frazier (1939), Johnson (1934) and several other Black scholars concluded that female-headed Black families were more strongly correlated with urbanization than with a rural, agricultural economy. As early as 1899, when W.E.B. DuBois investigated Black families in Philadelphia, he pointed to the over-representation of Black females in urban settings and argued that this was the result of easier access to employment for females in service work. He pointed to

the associated outcomes when Black men could not find employment adequate to support their families, and their consequent desertion from marriage and the rise in illegitimate births. The majority of studies, many undertaken to study the structure and relative strengths of Black families, indicate that typically, they were two-parent (Mintz, 1975). Analysis of female-headed households by race in various American cities in 1930, reveal that for the most part the nuclear two-parent family was a continuing trend. According to Furstenberg, et al., (1975), tabulations of family structure by measures of economic status in certain urban areas in the early twentieth century, indicate that even among the very poor, a substantial majority of the families were intact. Early manuscript census forms of individual cities and counties, as well as the earliest national census data in 1940, reveal that most of the women heading families in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were widow's, that divorce was rare, and that from times of slavery onward until about 1960, the nuclear family was the norm for Black as well as White families. The growth of female-headed families among Whites during the 1970's and 1980's has also led more analysts to reject the "legacy of slavery" thesis.

Numerous ethnographic studies, especially those conducted by Hylan Lewis (1967), Elliot Liebow (1967) and Charles Valentine (1968), consistently contradict the notion of a self-perpetuating "culture of poverty." Yet, over the past two decades, the popularity of this thesis has increased rather than declined, particularly among journalists. For example, television documentaries, such as Bill Moyer's "The Vanishing Black Family" (Corry, 1986), tend to "blame the victim" making family structure a cause rather than a consequence of economic problems. It is interesting to note that in his 1986 Harvard lectures on the American family, Senator Moynihan altered his original thesis by asserting that the problems affecting Black families are not unique to Blacks, but increasingly are having an impact on White families as well.

CURRENT CRISIS: RECENT TRENDS

The Task Force has identified five major categories which define the underlying trends in the current crisis affecting Black family life in New York State: Poverty, Income, Unemployment, Family Formation, and Human Services.

Poverty. According to the 1986 New York State Task Force on Poverty and Welfare report, in 1980

approximately 1.8 million poor people lived in the 100 largest central cities, in areas where the poverty rate was 40% or higher. Yet these inner city areas contain only 6.7% of the nation's poor. They reported that in New York State the problem is even more stark, with 22% of the poor concentrated in these high-poverty areas, most of which are in New York City.

In contrast to national trends, where poverty declined among Black families during the '70's, poverty increased among Black families in New York State. While the proportion of Black families below the official poverty level in the nation fell from 30% to 27% between 1969 and 1979, poverty rates among Black families in New York State rose from 20% to 26%. Surprisingly, poverty rose among both two-parent and one-parent Black families. Over the decade, while poverty rates among married Black couples edged up from 11% to 12%, the poverty rates among Black females who were heads of families rose from 41% to 44% (Table A). Among all White families in New York State, poverty rates remained at 7% but edged up from 23% to 24% among White females who were heads of families. By the end of the decade, Black families in New York State were about four times as likely as White families to be poor, while families headed by Black women were about twice as likely to be poor as those headed by White women.

Among Black families headed by women, there is a direct correlation between unemployment and poverty. The chances of a Black female family head falling into poverty are three out of five if she is not working, but they are only one out of three if she is working. According to the Census Bureau's, Current Population Reports (June, 1986), the rise in poverty among these one-parent Black families is mainly due to the fact that the women are three times more likely to be jobless today than they were over a decade and a half ago.

However, it is important to note that the working poor also experienced increased economic hardship. In fact, one-fourth of the 1.3 million Black female family heads who worked full-time during 1984 received wages that kept them below the poverty level (U.S. Bureau of Census, June, 1986). Clearly, a major strategy for reducing poverty among Black one-parent and working poor families is to provide employment and training experiences that enhance their chances for obtaining jobs at liveable wages.

During the 70's, the number of Black families on welfare increased nationally as well as in New York

State. While the proportion of Black families on welfare in the United States increased from 18% to 24% between 1969 and 1979, the proportion of Black families on welfare in New York State rose from 20% to 25%. However, while welfare increased nationaly from 38% to 42% among Black female-headed families, it slipped from 43% to 42% among like families in New York State (Table B). Contrary to popular belief, by the end of the decade, three out of five families headed by Black women, nationally as well as in New York State, were in the labor force and not on public assistance (U.S. Bureau of Census, March, 1984, and July, 1983).

Income. Although increases in "real income" (adjusted for inflation) for Black and White families in the United States kept somewhat ahead of increases in the cost of living during the '70's, income increases for Black and White families in New York State fell behind the pace of spiraling inflation. While the real income of Black and White families in the United States increased by 5% and 6% respectively, between 1969 and 1979, the real incomes of these families in New York State declined by 10% and 2%, respectively (Table C).

In general, Black two-parent families in New York State experienced increases in real income during the '70's, while one-parent Black families experienced declines. Between 1969 and 1979 the purchasing power of Black couples rose by 11%, while the real income among Black families with women as the head fell by 10%.

Closer examination reveals that not all two-parent Black families experienced gains in real income. In fact, the purchasing power of Black couples without working wives dropped by 9%, but increased by 3% among Black couples with working wives. The mere presence of two parents does not necessarily insure economic progress by Black families, but the fact that both are employed is a major contributing factor. Thus, the labor force participation of wives continues to be a key reason for the gains of midde-class Black families.

During the 70's, as was true at the national level, the proportion of middle-income Black families in New York State remained relatively constant, while the proportion of low-income Black families rose sharply. Between 1969 and 1979, the proportion of Black families with income under $10,000 (in constant 1979 dollars) increased from 31% to 39%, while the proportion of Black families with income of $20,000 and over, held at 31%. Similarly, the proportion of White families in New York State with income under $10,000 edged up from 15% to 16%, while the proportion of White

families with income of $20,000 and over remained at 56% (Table D).

Moreover, although the gap between the median incomes of Black and White families at the national level remained unchanged over that decade, the income gap widened between Black and White families in New York State. Between 1969 and 1979 the ratio of Black to White family income in the United States remained at 61%, yet the income ratio between Black and White families in New York State fell from 65% to 60% (Table E).

Unemployment. In 1985, the national employment rate for Whites was 7.2%, for non-Whites it was 13.7%; the national poverty rate was 14%, while the poverty rate among Blacks was 31%.

Black Americans represent 11% of the United States civilian non-institutionalized population. In June, 1986 they were 22.8% of the unemployed; 16.3% of the underemployed (those who work part-time but want full-time jobs); and 24% of discouraged workers (those who no longer seek employment because they believe they cannot find jobs (Burbridge, 1986a)).

Breadwinners in Black families became disproportionately unemployed or underemployed during the '70's and '80's because of several trends in the American economy: back-to-back recessions: 1970-71, 1974-75, 1980, and 1981-82; business closings in central cities and relocation of jobs to the suburbs and abroad; the shift from higher-paying, unionized manufacturing jobs to lower-paying, non-unionized service and high-tech jobs; double-digit inflationary spirals. In New York City, the financial crisis during the latter half of the '70's disproportionately affected Blacks and low-income groups.

Because of the seniority principle of "last hired, first fired", periodic recessions during the past fifteen years have affected Black workers and their families more harshly than they have White workers. Nationally, between 1970 and 1980, the jobless rate among White family heads rose from 2.5% to 4.0%, while unemployment among Black family heads grew from 4.5% to 8.4%. Although jobless rates among Black and White family heads in New York State were somewhat lower than their national jobless levels, similar increases in joblessness occurred over that decade. Between 1970 and 1980, unemployment among White family heads in New York State rose from 2.5% to 4.2%, while the jobless rate for Black family heads more than doubled from 3.8% to 7.8%.

Between 1970 and 1980, dislocations in the New York State economy had a marked effect on both two-and-one-parent Black families. The unemployment rate for Black husbands rose from 3.4% to 6.6%, the jobless rate for Black women who were heads of families grew from 5.3% to 10.3%. At the same time, the jobless rate for White husbands increased from 2.3% to 3.9%, while unemployment among White females who were heads of families rose from 4.5% to 6.7% (Table F). During the 70's and 80's, the sharp rise in joblessness among Black and White husbands increased family strife, and contributed to the unprecedented increase in marital dissolution, a decrease in the number of marriages formed, and the consequent growth of one parent families (Wilson and Neckerman, 1984, and Panel Study of Income Dynamics, 1971).

The impact of unemployment and its attendant economic problems upon family stability is well documented in the literature. The deterioration and dissolution of marriage and family life during the Depression is described in the work of Komarovsky (1940), and others. The work of Ross and Sawhill (1975), shows that unemployment is related to the incidence of female-headed households. The longitudinal data of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) derived by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan (1971), indicates a consistent correlation between marital instability and employment and economic difficulties.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy (Joe, 1984), reported figures which almost exactly parallel the rise in Black female-headed households. In 1960, about 74% of the Black male working age population had jobs. By 1983, only 55% were working. Professor William Wilson of the University of Chicago concludes:

> The weight of the evidence on the relationship between the employment status of men and marriage and family life, suggests that the increasing rate of joblessness among Black men, merits serious consideration as a major underlying factor in the rise of Black single mothers, and female-headed households (Wilson and Neckerman, 1984, p.34).

Family Formation. Limited economic and employment options resulting in chronic unemployment, create serious disincentives for marriage, and/or mutual or shared family commitments. The poverty of young Black males is associated with and exacerbates the poverty of the women they might have married.

From 1940 to 1975, the proportion of Black husband-wife families declined steadily from 77% to 61%, while White families remained essentially stable, at 86%. Since 1940, Black families headed by females have doubled, reaching 35% of total families by 1975. White families stayed around 11% for this period.

Since 1960 there has been a rapid growth in the number of Black households, 52% as opposed to a growth of 31% for White households. In the Black population, the presence of increased numbers of persons likely to form new households (e.g. young adults, never married females, etc.) and the higher marital disruption rates which result in the formation of two separate households, help to explain race differences in the household growth rate.

The 1980 Census reported 70.9 million White and 8.9 million Black households. Of these, approximately 68 million White and 8.3 million Black can be classified as family households. According to the Census Bureau a family household is comprised of two or more related persons. The Census revealed that 42% of the Black families are married couples as compared to 63% of the White families; Black families were three times more likely than White families to be headed by a single person.

The 1980 Census data also reported that Black families comprise 13% or 565,644 of the 4,468,031 families in New York State. While 49% of all families in the State report that they have no children, 37% of the total Black families have no children.

Single-Parent Families. After rising gradually during the '40's and '50's, the number of one-parent Black families increased markedly during the '70's and '80's. In the United States, between 1940 and 1960, the proportion of Black families headed by women grew from 18% to 21%. By 1970, the proportion of Black families headed by women increased to 27% and, a decade later, it reached 37%. Record-level rates of divorce and separation also resulted in a sharp growth of single-parent families among Whites. However, given the high re-marriage rate among White women, the actual proportion of female-headed White families only edged up from 9% to 11% between 1970 and 1980. During this same period in New York State, the proportion of female-headed households increased by about one-third among both Blacks and Whites. Despite this common trend, Black families remain much more likely than White families to be headed by females (43% vs. 13%) (Table G). As a result of these phenomena in the Black community, the proportion of Black children living with

both parents declined from 57% to 45% in the United States between 1970 and 1980, while the proportion of Black children living with both parents in New York State fell from 56% to 42% over that decade.

In many instances, the departure of a husband increases the vulnerability of the female-headed family to joblessness, poverty and dependence on welfare. In 1980, almost half (44%) of the Black families, compared to one-fourth (24%) of the White families headed by women in New York State, were poor.

Recent studies on poverty, joblessness, and family structure yield useful information on the characteristics of families with females as the head. The studies show that these families are heavily represented in the poverty population, disproportionately Black, and highly urbanized (Auletta, 1982). In addition, teenage pregnancies are strongly associated with poverty and ghetto residence, as well as with growing up in a single female-headed household as opposed to a married-couple or a three-generation family (Hogan and Kitagawa, 1985). The growth in female-headed families is due in large part to the increasing numbers of Black women who never marry; the more moderate increase among Whites is caused mainly by rising separation and divorce rates (Wilson and Neckerman, 1984).

Black female family heads are less likely than Whites to marry if single, or to remarry if widowed or divorced. Consequently, Black women remain single heads-of-household for longer periods of time than Whites (Ellwood and Bane, 1984). In addition, research shows that Black women, especially young Black women, face a shrinking pool of "marriageable" (i.e. employed) Black men, and that the changing economic status of Black men seems likely to be related to the rise in Black female-headed families (Wilson & Neckerman, 1984).

Teenage Pregnancy. Since the 1960's, the proportion of out-of-wedlock births among Black adolescents in the United States continued to decline, while continuing to rise among unmarried White teenagers. Between 1970 and 1982, nationally, the proportion of out-of-wedlock births to 15-19 year old Black females fell from 97 per thousand to 87 per thousand, but rose from 11 per thousand to 18 per thousand among White teenagers. Nevertheless, Black adolescents are still five times more likely to have an out-of-wedlock baby than are White adolescents.

Although Blacks make up one-third of the female teens in New York City, in 1983, they accounted for

about half (46%) of the 34,000 pregnancies to 15-19 year old teenagers. Further, while 62% of the Black teen pregnancies were terminated by abortions, about three-fourths (76%) of the White teen pregnancies were aborted. Ultimately, nine out of ten (94%) births to Black teenagers were out-of-wedlock, compared to one out of two (51%) of the births to White teenagers. The combination of low marriage and abortion rates among pregnant Black teenagers compounds the odds of pregnancy leading to single parenthood. In fact, for Black teenagers, the chances of becoming a single parent are one in three compared to just over one in ten among White teenagers. In many instances, except for their social and economic opportunities, many of these Black teenagers are more similar than different from their White counterparts prior to a pregnancy which goes to term.

When children have children profound negative social and economic consequences ensue for the girls themselves, for their babies, and for the teenagers' families. A report on adolescent pregnancy and parenting in New York City (1986) puts forth findings that are frequently documented. Infant mortality rates are twice as high for the babies of Black as compared to White teens. If they survive, babies born to unmarried teens tend to be less healthy, less academically successful in school, more likely to grow up in a single-parent, welfare dependent family and more apt to become single parents themselves. Similarly, in a Special Report: Adolescent Pregnancy (1984), the New York State Council on Children and Families reports that teen mothers and fathers are more likely to drop out of school, to go on welfare or to be unemployed, than adult parents having their first child. Although the number of Black teenagers who become pregnant is expected to decline in the coming decades because of the aging of the baby boom cohort, the current rate of teenage pregnancies will have devastating long-term effects on the structure and functioning of Black families.

According to the Children's Defense Fund (1985), single-parenthood among teens is more closely correlated to poverty than to race or other indicators. Whether Black or White, disadvantaged young women are three to four times more likely to become unwed parents than are advantaged teens. Given the higher poverty rates among minority families, minority teens are at higher risk of early pregnancy. Nationally, they account for 27% of the adolescent population, about 50% of the poor adolescents, and about 40% of the teenage mothers.

Informal Adoption. Compared to only 18% of White households, 31% of Black households in the 1980 Census were extended families (Allen and Farley, 1987). Extended family households include a variety of family members who augment nuclear families where parents and their children are present. As with many other features of the Black family, the reasons for this practice have both economic and socio-cultural origins.

According to Stack (1974) extensive networks of Black kin and friends devise ways of dealing with severe deprivation by adopting elastic household boundaries, rather than small nuclear families. Similarly, Shifflett (1975) shows a close relationship between extended households and low economic status. Further, he points to evidence of strong Black kinship networks and argues that the burden of poverty induced Black families to develop and rely on those kinship networks.

One of the African cultural traits that endured during and after slavery was the widespread practice of "informal adoption" of children by extended Black family members. Historically, informal adoption or "doubling-up" has risen among Blacks during periods of economic hardship or family instability. Children, even entire families, may move in with kin until a recently unemployed, divorced or evicted parent is able to obtain a more secure situation. Thus, the proportion of Black female-headed families moving in with relatives grew from 21% to 39% during the 1970-71 and 1974-75 recessions (Hill, 1977).

Between 1970 and 1979, the number of Black children living in the households of relatives rose from 1.3 million to 1.4 million, raising the proportion of informally adopted Black children from 13% to 15%. Over that same period, the number of White children living with relatives increased from 1.6 million to 1.9 million raising their proportion from 3% to 4%. Thus, the Black informal adoption network succeeded in finding homes for 1.4 million children--more than ten times the number of Black children awaiting placement in the formal foster care system (Hill, 1981).

Clearly, the extended Black family continues to be a viable mechanism for placing children and should be used as a resource by public and private adoption and foster care agencies.

Although informal adoption has been more pervasive among Blacks in the South, the proportion of informally adopted Black children in New York State is almost as high as it is nationally. In New York State in 1980,

12% of Black children lived in households headed by someone other than their parents--either a relative (9%) or non-relative (3%), while only four-percent of White children lived with a relative (2%) or non-relative (2%). In New York State, Black children are four-times more likely to live in informally adoptive settings with relatives than are White children (Table H).

Human Services

Education. According to the report, Dropping Out of School in New York State: The Invisible People of Color (1986), 53% of the Black youths in New York State drop out of school. In the New York City school system, where the student population is three-fourths Black and Hispanic, the official school dropout rate is reported anywhere from 28% to 31% (Drop-out Report 1985-1986, p.2). Because there is no standard dropout measure, the debate often focuses on whether the real rate is higher than officially reported, rather than focusing on the critical problem of massive educational failure. The school system's inability to retain, motivate, and prepare students for the labor market and post-secondary education, has severe implications for the Black family, the Black community, and New York State.

A 1981 report by the Education Commission of the States, found that 47% of urban Black teenagers were functionally illiterate. Increased economic competition from foreign markets, employer dissatisfaction with workers skills, declines in student test scores, and shortages of quality teachers in urban centers, reflect the "rising tide of mediocrity" reported by a spate of national reports calling for educational reform. While policymakers posture, the very reforms they call for threaten the fragile status of most educationally "at-risk" youth.

Current statewide initiatives have concentrated on increased graduation requirements by way of strengthened curriculum. While a stronger curriculum, sensitized to the needs of the marketplace is important, it does not address the very real learning problems of the youngsters sitting in public school classrooms across the state. To simply mandate that youngsters spend more time in school, on coursework unrelated to their needs, delivered through instructional practices antithetical to their learning styles, and often irrelevant to life outside the schoolhouse door, is to merely maintain the status quo. For youngsters growing up poor, with limited observable supports and few role

models who excel in the marketplace as a result of their educational achievements, a more creative approach is needed for motivation, retention, and graduation.

Many policy makers have called for change in the ways we educate, recruit, and induct new teachers. They demand that we provide all teachers with the skills needed to reach "at-risk" youths. Although faculty development is a prerequisite for improved student learning, reformers have paid little attention and directed few resources toward filling this need. While most observers recognize that the distance between today's White, middle class teachers and their poor, Black students is far greater than the distance between the ghetto and the suburb, neither the universities nor the local boards of education have adequately addressed this problem.

Scarce resources increase the drop-out rate. A 1985 study of state retention rates by education analyst Harold Hodgkinson, found that dropout rates for schools with the most favorable teacher-to-student ratios were less than two-thirds of those for schools with the worst ratios.

A state-wide plan which targets resources by an equitable system of allocation and considers the issues of class size, of adequate equipment, of available faculty development programs with appropriate subsidies for released time and reduced work load, (with stipulated clauses which preclude reduction of resources once gains are attained), begins to touch on some of the issues for school reform which can reach the most "at-risk" students in our poorest communities.

The connection between staying in school and reaching life goals presumes a long range strategy for living; such a strategy often eludes Black youth. High rates of Black teen unemployment in New York State exacerbate the difficulties youngsters have in a school environment resistant to change or flexibility when dealing with them. Teen pregnancy may be viewed by young Blacks as a viable alternative to an educational setting offering neither adequate social support nor assurances of preparation for work in an available, current, or steady job.

Often, no attention is given to the school-to-work transition which might strengthen awareness of the possibilities and requirements of the labor market. For Black youngsters this is a particularly critical need.

Black youth requires all of the supports necessary to allow them to understand the life options and opportunities which are there for them to explore. They need schools and other social institutions to infuse them with the motivation and desire to fulfill their potential - that same potential which often is stifled by the many social and environmental pressures which they must endure. Black youths need the requisite education which will help them to develop a process for living their lives in pursuit and fulfillment of long range goals. They need a school environment which supports an integrated approach to their future.

If youngsters in the poorest school districts are to be helped to become thoughtful and productive citizens with options and alternatives in their lives, the State must advocate, and support with dollars, enhanced curricula, advanced technology and equipment, activities to develop a sensitive and sensitized teaching force, and programs which offer liberal education and practical career exploration. These are the cues and lessons which will convey to all youngsters, but particularly to Black youngsters, who are most often without role models or school based supports, a level of concern and investment in their lives.

Health Care. Health related concerns in the Black family cover a broad and varied range (teenagers bearing children, low birth weight and premature babies, high infant mortality rates, and a growing cohort of elderly Blacks whose physical needs are compounded by long years of inadequate health care, often high-risk employment circumstances, and lack of dietary and social supports). No attempt will be made here to examine the full impact of the health care needs and services for the Black family, since that will be covered by the sub-committee on Health established by the Committee on Black Affairs. However, it must be acknowledged that a crisis exists in the health care area for the Black family that has continuous negative repercussions.

According to a 1985 United States Department of Health and Human Services report, "the poor health status observed in many minority groups, and differences remaining between minorities and non-minorities in types of care and financing, suggest that minorities still have poorer access to and use of comprehensive and high-quality health care" (p. 187).

Although Medicaid has made medical care accessible to many Black families (e.g., a 1983 Robert Wood

Johnson survey found that 20% of Blacks used Medicaid as their only source of health insurance), reimbursement schedules limit the range of available health services, and frequent changes in program eligibility tend to disrupt the continuity of health care. Similarly, continuity of health care is related to employment status as well as to Medicaid eligibility. Given the instability of employment patterns of Black heads-of-household, greater proportions of Blacks are without health insurance for some portion of the year, than are non-minority populations.

The Black families of New York State suffer from an unequal standard of health care due to a complex web of socio-economic realities.

Child Care. The growth in the number of working mothers during the '70's has exacerbated the need for child care, especially in Black families. Two-thirds (65%) of Black wives with children under age 18 in New York State were in the labor force in 1980, compared to only half (47%) of White wives. Among single mothers, however, 54% of Black mothers were in the labor force, compared to 61% of White mothers. Even among wives with pre-school children under age 6, 60% of Black mothers in New York State were in the labor force, compared to only one-third (34%) of White mothers. And among single mothers with pre-school children, the same proportion of Black mothers (41%) as White mothers (41%) were in the labor force.

There is a significant relationship between child care, economic development, and self-sufficiency. The state's economy depends on an ample supply of workers, many of whom require child care in order to be able to work. The lack of accessible, affordable, quality child care precludes many single heads-of-household from the possibility of taking part in education, training, or employment opportunities. We support the recommendations of the 1986 New York State Task Force on Poverty and Welfare in calling for "government intervention and subsidies that are appropriate to expand the child care choices of poor working parents" (p.68). The availability of quality child care is directly related to the economic ability of families to take advantage of existing child care programs, or to create private child care arrangements. For the poor, many of whom are Black single heads-of-household, these options remain economically inaccessible.

While government need not manage and run a child care system, it does have the responsibility to ensure a standardized and monitored child care system. The Task Force supports the overriding principle set forth in

the 1986 Report of the New York State Commission on Child Care, "... child care services should be economically and racially integrated, reflecting the diverse backgrounds and rich cultural and ethnic heritage of New York State's families" (p.1). In order to help equalize access for the children of New York State to quality affordable care, the Task Force on the Black Family recommends the expansion of the child care tax credit. New York State played an active and visible role in the formulation and passage of the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Similar advocacy is required for further tax changes which might include making the child care tax credit refundable (i.e. the credit is paid even if the person has no tax liability). Further, expansion of pre-school programs to include greater numbers of three and four year olds will provide the multiple benefits of early educational enrichment, supportive quality care and learning, and the flexibility required for parents to work.

Without child care, opportunities for increased employment and education cannot be utilized by large numbers of Black families.

Foster Care. Although the total number of children in foster care declined sharply over the past decade, the proportion of Black children in foster care increased significantly. The total number of children in foster care in the United States declined from 500,000 to 250,000 between 1977 and 1984. Over that same period, the proportion of Black children in foster care grew from about one-fourth (28%) to about one-third (34%) of all children in foster care. Historically, children were placed in foster care primarily because of abuse and neglect. But, in recent years, disproportionate numbers of Black children are being voluntarily placed by parents who point to the unavailability of affordable low-income housing as the reason for their inability to keep the family together (Daley, 1987).

In New York City, between 1977 and 1984, the number of children in foster care fell from 24,000 to 16,000. However, about two-thirds of the remaining children are Black. Blacks and Hispanics together account for almost nine out of ten (87%) of the children in foster care (Oreskes, 1987). Through the use of inappropriate criteria that "screen out" potential adoptive parents (i.e., persons over 40 years of age, single parents, persons with low income, etc.) hundreds of Black children are detained in the limbo of foster care for most of their childhood (Report of the Mayor's Task Force on Foster Care in New York City, 1984).

Although Black foster children are less likely than White foster children to have physical disabilities, Black children remain in foster care much longer than White children. Consequently, Black children are more likely than White children to "age out" of foster care when they turn eighteen (American Public Welfare Association, 1983). Many of these older youth are unprepared to make the transition to independent living. Hundreds are discharged from foster care without having acquired adequate educational and vocational skills. Many studies have found that individuals who were in foster care for long periods of time make up the greater proportion of the homeless, alcoholics, prostitutes, drug addicts and incarcerated felons (New York State Task Force on Permanency Planning for Children in Foster Care, 1986). A recent survey revealed that about half of the homeless youth in New York City formerly were in foster care (Schaffer and Caton, 1984). Major reforms are needed to transform the foster care system into a positive and healthy developmental experience for thousands of Black children, youths, and their families.

Affordable Housing. Although most American families experienced increased difficulties in obtaining quality, affordable housing during the 70's and 80's, this problem was particularly acute among Black and other low-income families. Studies reveal that more than 60% of the 21 million very low-income households had severe housing problems, including substandard conditions, overcrowding and rising cost burdens. Between 1975 and 1983, for example, the number of low income households spending more than half of their income on rent and utilities rose from 3.7 million to 6.3 million. Moreover, hundreds of Black families were displaced from their homes by public and private enterprises, such as urban renewal, condominium conversions, commercial development, and evictions for inability to pay increased rents (Children's Defense Fund, 1986).

Among Blacks, the housing crisis was particularly acute in New York State because of the disproportionate number of renters, the group most affected by escalating costs. In 1980, 44% of all Black household heads in the United States were homeowners, but only half as many (22%) of Blacks in New York State owned their homes. Whites in New York also lag behind the national rate (55% versus 68%) in home ownership. Yet Whites in New York are two and a half times more likely than Blacks to own their own home (Table I).

Black homeowners and renters in New York State experienced sharp declines in their purchasing power

during the 70's. Between 1970 and 1980, real income among Black homeowners declined by 8%, while for Black renters, income fell three times as fast, dropping by 23%. Since the rent of Black households rose much faster than their real income, the portion of income going to pay rent for Blacks in New York increased from 22% to 29% during this period (Table J).

The overwhelming majority of Black renters (72%) and White renters (86%) in New York State live in private housing with no government support. Nevertheless, Blacks are twice as likely as Whites to live in publicly-supported housing. In 1980, while 14% of all renters in New York SMSA's either lived in public housing (10%), or had their rent subsidized (4%), 28% of all Black renters were either in public housing (22%), or in a subsidized unit (6%) (Table K). It is clear that the past and proposed deep cuts in Federal funding for subsidized and public housing will have a devastating impact on Black families.

BEHAVIORAL CORRELATES

Social injustice breeds anti-social behavior. Inequities in wages and employment opportunities, inadequate incomes generated in occupations segregated by race and gender, poor school environments, and poor neighborhoods, lead to unacceptable social responses which are borne of poverty, despair and desperation.

Concentrated Black poverty in large cites has become a central concern of many urban scholars. The increasing isolation of the poor is seen as a spur in the perpetuation of the cycle of unemployment, broken families, teen age pregnancy, crime, and drug dependency. In New York in 1970, there were 311,841 poor Blacks in poverty areas. By 1980 the number had grown to 452,030 and included all but 14% of the poor Blacks in the city. There are no comparable figures since 1980, but Census surveys show that New York's overall population below the poverty line increased 14% to 1.58 million between 1980 and 1983, a period in which Manhattan's economic boom was in process. According to many experts (Herbers, 1987), most of the new poor were Blacks in poverty areas.

The results of the inter-connectedness among economic, structural, and racial variables of the larger society, and their effect on the attitudes and behaviors of the Black community, most noticeably, the Black poor - are easily observed. The behavioral correlates of these isolated families are annotated by

some of the negative daily statistics which we examine briefly.

Drug Dependency. The correlation between drug dependency and employment availability has been documented (Primm, 1987, and Helmer and Vietorisz, 1974). Dr. Primm (1987) documents that the most prominent causes for the disproportionate minority representation among substance abusers are: unemployment, overt racism, poor inner-city schools with high drop-out rates, and the continually shrinking level of participation in the labor market. He also indicates that, "changes in the economy (especially those connected to recessions) are related to increased social stress, which frequently result in increased use of alcohol and other psychotropic substances, as reactions to distress," (p.152).

The behavioral response of drug dependency to the wide range of social forces infringing on individuals in the Black community can be viewed as sociological in origin. While stress is the result of social concerns, it produces physical responses in persons functioning under its impact. According to Dr. Primm:

> Black Americans...suffer disproportionately on every social indicator available for study. Given racial prejudice, continuing high unemployment, and crime in the Black population districts... Black Americans suffer an inordinate amount of stress. We...speculate that Blacks are disproportionately represented among drug-dependent cohorts, because of unbearably high stress (p. 155).

Citing a litany of socio-economic and political solutions to the circumstances which produce drug dependent behavior would serve no purpose. Improved conditions of employment and education as well as decreased poverty would increase the self esteem and reduce the amount of stress on Black families. However, short of solving all the attendant problems, the Task Force strongly recommends the development and funding for a large scale drug education and prevention program to be presented throughout the schools (pre-K through college).

Criminal Activity. The 1985 Task Force report on Black and Minority Health (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services) cites numerous studies indicating that violent crimes, its offenders, and its victims are most frequently found in urban areas characterized by, "low income, physical deterioration, welfare dependency,

disrupted families, deficient social supports, low levels of education and vocational skills, high unemployment, greater proportions of single males, overcrowded and substandard housing, low rates of home ownership or single family dwellings, mixed land use, and high population density" (p.162). They note higher levels of criminal activity (as both victims and perpetrators) among Blacks, and particularly among young Black males.

Family, school, and adolescent violence; childhood aggression; alcohol and drug abuse are important focal points for efforts at crime prevention. The Black and Minority Health report goes on to state that, "such preventive efforts are particularly needed in low-income, inner-city communities characterized by high rates of family disorganization, unemployment and school dropouts" (p. 165).

No attempt will be made here to examine the full impact of crime on the Black family, since that will be covered by a subcommittee on criminal justice established by the Committee on Black Affairs. However, the Task Force believes that the socio-economic and stress related conditions of life for poor Black families that often result in criminal behavior, requires at the very least, a wide range of programs to introduce alternative coping mechanisms to deal with reality. Therefore, the Task Force supports the recommendations of the Health and Human Services report, which we include in our own summary of recommendations. We believe that a targeted effort is required to reduce the behavioral symptoms which often lead to crime in the Black family.

CAUSES OF THE CRISIS

The previous section outlined the crisis faced by Black families in New York and in the nation. The average Black family is poorer than the average White family and many more Black families are headed by a single, usually a female, parent. Many explanations have been given for the rise in Black female-headed households but, generally, they can be categorized into four groups: those that point to demographic changes in the Black population, notably the rise in numbers of young, Black females of childbearing age, and a shortage of young marriageable Black men; those that suggest that the availability of transfer payments -- particularly AFDC -- have provided a disincentive for Blacks to marry and have children in the context of a "traditional" two-parent family; those that emphasize changes in the attitudes and behaviors of Blacks regarding females heading households and out-of-wedlock births,

particularly among inner-city Black youth; and those who emphasize unemployment among Blacks, particularly Black males, as destablizing the Black family.

The Task Force on the Black family reviewed these differing views and concluded that the crisis of the Black family derives primarily from high unemployment and the labor market problems of Blacks.

The next section provides an overview of the different explanations given for the increases in Black female-headed households, the strengths and weaknesses of those explanations, the empirical evidence that "proves" or "disproves" them, and the reasons why the Task Force came to emphasize the labor market explanation as the one of greatest importance.

The Rise in Black Female-Headed Families. Various explanations have been given for the rise in Black female-headed families. It is a hotly debated issue in scholarly journals, in the press, and in political forums. The policy implications of this phenomenon depend upon which explanations are accepted. It is important, therefore, to give them careful attention.

There are two demographic arguments regarding the rise in female heads-of-household. The first one focuses on the increase in the number of young women of childbearing age -- as a result of the post-World War II baby boom. According to this argument the increased number of female-headed families is the result of population growth and changes in the population's age structure, particularly among Blacks. For example, Ross and Sawhill (1975) found that between 1960 and 1970, 37% of the growth in Black female-headed households was due to population growth, particularly the increase in the number of women "at-risk" of bearing so-called illegitimate children. In other words, without any change in the behavior of these women, an increase in the number of female heads-of-household would be expected. However, later studies (Bradbury, Danziger, Smolensky, and Smolensky, 1979) found demographic change to be less important in explaining increases since 1970.

The other demographic explanation focuses on the shortage of young Black males. This argument, however, has both a demographic and an economic component. It is not only that there are fewer men, because the death rate of Black males is high, but even fewer eligible men: those who are alive and who have the means to support a family.

While numerous reports point to the increased average income levels of employed Black men, these studies ignore the increase in the proportion of unemployed Black males. Considering the high unemployment and incarceration rates for Black males (Blumstein, 1982), the percentage of eligible Black men is more limited than when focusing only on mortality rates (Farley, 1980). As a result, Black women are much less likely to marry or re-marry than White women. Thus, more Black females are the heads of their families following divorce or widowhood, than is the case for Whites, and fewer single Black women who become pregnant marry the child's father than do single pregnant White women.

Many social scientists note the severe repercussions from this situation. Indications are that this shortage of eligible Black males and its attendant phenomena have such a destabilizing effect on the Black community, that it causes more family dislocations than the numbers alone suggest.

Another explanation is that access to welfare benefits has led to a rise in female-headed families. According to this position Black women choose welfare recipiency over the support of a husband. There has been little empirical support for this argument.

Most studies of the effect of AFDC on female-headship or "out-of-wedlock births" found no statistically significant relationship (for a review of the literature on empirical studies of the effect of welfare and other income transfer programs on out-of-wedlock births and marital instability, see Wilson and Neckerman, 1984). Where some effect was found between AFDC and female heads-of-household, it was often quite modest, explaining only a small fraction of the growth in these families. Among others, Ellwood and Bane (1984) examined changes over time in state benefit levels and in out-of-wedlock birth rates and concluded that AFDC benefit levels seem to have different effects on marital break-up, births to unmarried women, and changes in living arrangements. Overall, their research indicates that welfare does not appear to be the underlying cause of the dramatic changes in family structure of the past few decades.

The argument that attitudes and beliefs have changed the behavior of Blacks is posited frequently, although there is little empirical support for this position. While there can be no question that the phenomenon of female heads-of-household has generally become more acceptable, this is true across race and class lines. However, many people believe that it has

become far more acceptable among Blacks than among Whites, and that this greater acceptability is the result of a "culture of poverty" that has taken root in the Black community.

Essentially, proponents of this view suggest that poor families, particularly poor Blacks, are caught in a "cycle of poverty", that is, behavior patterns that initially developed in response to poverty, have been internalized. They assert that these behavior patterns, representing a culture of poverty, have now become an independent cause of poverty rather than a simple response to it. Oscar Lewis (1966) described the culture of poverty as "both an adaptation and reaction of the poor to their marginal position in a class stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic society". He also noted that once the culture of poverty comes into existence, "it tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effect on the children" (pp.xliv and xlv).

There are different explanations for how the cycle of poverty begins. Most authors emphasize discrimination and poor labor market performance, but the dislocations caused by recent urbanization and migration are also discussed. Whatever initial conditions are posed as causing the cycle of poverty, the thrust of the argument remains the same--certain characteristics of the poor, such as females as heads of the family, are now a part of the culture.

This argument is difficult to test empirically since it is difficult to quantify "cultural attitudes." Nevertheless, those studies that have been able to test the impact of attitudes on behavior found little support for a "culture of poverty" argument. For example, Corcoran, Duncan, Gurin, and Gurin (1985) examined individual responses to attitudinal questions in the Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics, and found no relationship between the respondent's attitudes and the success or failire of their children over time. Further, Black children from welfare families were not more likely to be welfare dependent nor did welfare dependency have any effect on Black male labor force participation.

Other studies support the contention that children raised in welfare families are not fated to an adulthood of poverty because of deficient values (Macaulay, 1977); that highly motivated youths frequently are the product of Black families and the socialization processes therein (Allan, 1978). In a survey of empirical studies of welfare dependency Shiller (1973) concluded that welfare mothers, "confronted with few opportunities to achieve upward mobility themselves", looked to

their children's future as holding the possibilities for success. Ethnographic research has consistently found that work for adequate pay to support a decent living standard is a central value of Black men and women (Liebow, 1967).

The fourth argument explaining increases in Black female headed households, focuses on unemployment among Blacks, particularly Black males. The relationship between male employment and income, and marital stability and formation, has been consistently shown in the empirical literature.

Several of the studies, that analyze the impact of AFDC receipt on family structure, also look at or control for the effect of male income or local economic conditions (Wilson and Neckerman, 1984). The negative impact of male joblessness or low earnings on marriage has been consistently found, whether the studies focused on personal characteristics or the economic conditions of the geographical areas in which they live. Findings by Ross and Sawhill (1975) are particularly instructive in that they found no "pure income effect" on marital instability. Rather it was the fluctuations in income that were important. In other words, income instability has a major impact on martial stability.

Further, high unemployment is often suggested as an explanation for out-of-wedlock births among Black teenagers. Black teens, with limited role models or visions beyond their impoverished communities, may justifiably take joy in producing a child if that child does not interfere with any reasonable plans for the future or hopes for success. Perceiving few opportunities in the labor market, Black teens may see little to be lost by having a child and dropping out of school.

Therefore, in reviewing these arguments, the Task Force on the Black Family concluded that of the many explanations for the rise of Black female-headed families, the one with the greatest logical and empirical support focuses on Black unemployment.

While other explanations for the rise in Black families headed by women may identify contributory events, the labor market explanation is the most fundamental. Not only has the relationship between female heads-of-household and labor market performance been consistently shown in research studies, the other arguments presented are not independent of the labor market explanation. For example, were it true that AFDC receipt is the "cause" of females heading families, only those with serious problems in the labor market would consider the relatively low AFDC payment

as an alternative source of income. The culture of poverty argument usually cites lack of success in the labor market as an initial condition responsible for the "cycle of poverty". Similarly, the shortage of Black males is a result of economic factors; homicides and incarcerations are linked to economic disruptions. Clearly, understanding the crisis facing the Black family requires comprehension of the problems Blacks face in the labor market.

One critique of this position is that Black female-headed households began to rise in the 1960's when Black unemployment was declining. However, this can be misleading. First, the data reveal that labor force participation among Black males fell continuously during the 1960's. A large part of the drop in unemployment among Blacks during this period, reflected declines in Black labor force participation. Second, in spite of the overall trends which reveal decreasing unemployment, the unemployment levels of Black youth -- those of marriageable age -- continued to increase during this period. Third, research shows (Ross and Sawhill, 1975) that almost 40 percent of the growth in female-headed households during the 1960's, was a result of demographic changes indicated by increased numbers of young women of child-bearing age, and thus, an increase in the "at-risk" population. Finally, while the numbers of Black female heads-of-household began to rise in the 1960's, the greatest growth was in the 1970's, a time of rising unemployment rates.

There are those who would argue that this decline in Black male labor force participation is a result of AFDC recipiency; that since Black families could be supported by AFDC, Black males had less of an incentive to work and to marry. However, the literature reviews cited earlier found very little relationship between AFDC and the growth of Black female-headed-households.

Blacks in the Labor Market. Various theories have been presented to explain the problems faced by Blacks in the labor market. Some emphasize Black's "personal characteristics" such as, low education levels, while others emphasize the discrimination Blacks face in the labor market. Of particular interest are the structural changes in the economy which hurt Blacks, who are in more vulnerable jobs, to a greater extent than Whites. While the Task Force agrees that Blacks do suffer because of lower education and skill levels, discrimination is still an important barrier to Black progress in the labor market. Thus, discriminatory practices, exacerbated by structural changes in the economy, have a devastatingly negative impact on Blacks.

Blacks in New York. This section presents a general picture of Black employment in New York State, as compared to the nation as a whole, and considers the prospects for Blacks in the New York labor market given changes that have occurred there.

Table 1 includes data on the employment status of Blacks and Whites in New York State and in the United States during 1985, the most recent date for which data are available. Several trends are presented in this table. First, Whites do better than Blacks; that is: they have higher participation and employment-to-population rates, and lower unemployment rates. Second, New York has lower participation rates and employment-to-population ratios as well as slightly lower unemployment rates for all races, than is the case for the nation as a whole. Third, the employment differences between Blacks and Whites are greatest among 16-19 year-old youths. Fourth, the employment differences between Black and White youth are greater in New York than throughout the nation.

For example, consider the following statistics for the nation as a whole versus New York. In New York, the percent of the population that is employed (employment-to-population ratio) is lower for both Whites and Blacks; however the difference in the employment-to-population ratio between Black and White youth is greater. The employment-to-population ratio of White 16-19 year olds is 2.5 times that of the Black youth in New York (38.9% of the Whites are employed, compared to only 15.5% of the Blacks) and 2.0 times that of Black youth nationally, (48.5% compared to 24.6%).

Similarly, the labor force participation rate (the percentage of the population in the labor force either employed or seeking work) is lower for both Blacks and Whites in New York State; and the difference in labor force participation between Black and White youth is more pronounced. In addition, unemployment rates tend to be lower in New York State (possibly because participation in the labor force is lower). However, a major exception is the Black youth unemployment rate of 42.5% in New York, which is higher than the national rate of 40.2%, while the rate for White youth in New York is slightly less than the national rate.

This table demonstrates that Black youth in New York have a more difficult time finding employment, than their counterparts in other areas of the nation. This has serious implications for family formation if, in fact, a poor labor market history is important in explaining the formation of female-headed households

TABLE 1

EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY RACE, GENDER AND AGE

NEW YORK STATE AND THE UNITED STATES, 1985

	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment Population Ratio	Unemployment Rate
New York State			
White			
Men	74.0	69.6	6.0
Women	49.9	47.1	5.7
Both Sexes, 16-19	46.0	38.9	15.4
Black			
Men	64.8	56.4	13.0
Women	51.5	46.6	9.5
Both Sexes, 16-19	26.9	15.5	42.5
All Races			
Men	72.8	67.9	6.7
Women	50.2	47.0	6.3
Both Sexes, 16-19	41.5	33.7	18.8
United States			
White			
Men	77.0	72.3	6.1
Women	54.1	50.7	6.4
Both Sexes, 16-19	57.5	48.5	15.7
Black			
Men	70.8	60.0	15.3
Women	56.5	48.1	14.9
Both Sexes, 16-19	41.2	24.6	40.2
All Races			
Men	76.3	70.9	7.0
Women	54.5	50.4	7.4
Both Sexes, 16-19	54.5	44.4	18.6

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 1985 and Employment and Earnings, January 1986.

among young Blacks. When these households are formed among the very young, they are usually the result of out-of-wedlock births, rather than separation or divorce as is often the case among the more mature.

Table 2 presents data on the Black and White labor force in New York State and SMSA's within the State. Blacks make up 12.3% of the New York State labor force but a full 33.2% of the New York City-New Jersey SMSA. The overwhelming majority of Blacks in the State work in New York City.

In the future, minorities are expected to constitute an even larger portion of the New York City labor force. The forecast of labor force change in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area to the year 1995, reveals that the total labor force in the 17 county metropolitan region is expected to increase by 463,000 to a level of 8 million people. For the period 1985-1995 all the labor force growth is expected to occur in the minority population which will increase to 605,000, while the White labor force is expected to decrease by 142,000.

Most of the minority labor force growth will be made up of women, whose participation is expected to increase by over 300,000. At the same time, of the anticipated 605,000 total minority labor force, 20,000 will be teenagers 16 to 19 years old and 38,000 will be in the 20 to 24 age group. By 1995, minorities will account for 35% of this entry level group compared to 24% in 1980.

Despite the growth projections for this area, the prognosis for Blacks, particularly those who are low-skilled, is not good. For example, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey projects job growth between 1986 and 1990 of .9% annually. Most of that growth is expected to be in the services: finance, insurance and real estate. Employment in manufacturing, which traditionally provided stable and relatively high wage jobs to low-skilled workers, will continue to decline.

According to a recent article in The New York Times, (Kasarda, 1986), employment in manufacturing declined by 22% in New York City between 1980 and 1986 while service jobs, led by high skills information processing jobs, increased by 21%. The article cited statistics compiled by John Kasarda, a proponent of the spatial mismatch hypothesis. According to him, most of the job growth in the nations large cities is in high

TABLE 2

NEW YORK LABOR FORCE BY RACE AND SMSA[1]

PERSONS 16 YEARS OLD OR OLDER

	Black		White		All Races	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States	10,866,343	10.2	90,434,967	85.2	106,084,668	100.0
New York State[2]	991,479	12.3	6,612,050	82.2	8,041,175	100.0
Albany, Schenectady, Troy SMSA	12,525	3.3	358,390	95.6	374,796	100.0
Buffalo SMSA	42,785	7.5	521,045	91.2	571,469	100.0
Nassau-Suffolk SMSA	70,806	5.8	1,138,739	92.6	1,229,922	100.0
New York City-New Jersey SMSA	1,397,330	33.2	3,004,712	71.5	4,205,168	100.0
Rochester SMSA	49,618	10.6	427,535	91.4	467,682	100.0
Syracuse SMSA	12,878	4.3	281,063	94.4	297,780	100.0

Source: 1980 Census of Population: Detailed Population Characteristics, U.S. Summary; 1980 Census of Population, Detailed Population Characteristics, New York State.

Notes:
1. No racial breakout was available for 4 New York SMSAs: Binghamton, Newburgh, Middletown and Utica-Rome.

2. Because the New York City SMSA includes parts of New Jersey, the Black labor force within this SMSA is more than that for New York State as a whole.

skills service occupations. Much of the blue collar employment has moved to the suburbs, the South and overseas, reducing employment possibilities for minorities in urban areas, particularly those without high levels of education. Additionally, the costs of housing and relocation are too prohibitive for this group to be able to move to areas where jobs may be available. Thus a healthy economic prognosis for the State or the City does not necessarily mean improved employment prospects for Blacks.

New York is no longer a primary producer. It is now the financial capital of the Western world, a place where business transactions are executed electronically. The major growth areas are in those services requiring skills appropriate to the execution of those electronic transactions, and the delivery of the underlying services. Such skills are significantly different in terms of the amount, the quality, and the quantity of education required by the worker. In the past, training of employees could take place through "on the line" apprenticeships and similar "how-to" strategies, which taught people repetitive and simple, non-demanding factory functions. The education necessary for such activities was far less than the amount of education required today to perform the more complex tasks of a technologically advanced economy. The challenge to the State of New York is to embrace an economic development policy based on full employment programs designed to reduce the disjuncture between education, curriculum content, training for the transition from school to work, and jobs.

To provide a context within which to look at Black families, this section has presented an overview of Blacks in the labor market, and the projections for the future Black labor force and future jobs in New York, as compared to the nation. The following section focuses more narrowly on Black households, by using household heads in the labor market as our referent. As already discussed, while we are concerned with the prospects for forming a household, we also need to consider the labor market and its impact on currently existing households.

The Labor Market and Family Heads. In this section data are presented which describe those Blacks who are heads-of-households, their education levels, their occupations and their location in the New York labor market. We will examine their labor market status while controlling for education and family type.

Education. In New York, heads of Black households have lower education levels than White household heads. Table 3 presents data on their educational attainment. According to 1980 Census data for New York State, 63% of the Black males and 60% of the Black females who are household heads completed high school, compared to 72% of the White males and 67% of the White females who are household heads. Comparing these Black and White males, 32% more Blacks had less than a high school education, while 21% more Black females had less than a high school education, as compared to the White females. Further, White men and women heading families were twice as likely as their Black counterparts to have at least a college degree.

Can these educational differences explain the labor market problems of Blacks? Table 4 presents data on Black and White household earnings by education of the head of the household. Even when controlling for their education and family type, Blacks earn less than the Whites. While contributory, education levels and family composition are insufficient explanations for such differences in earnings. Census data for New York indicate that in 1980 the mean earnings of the Black household heads were less than the mean earnings for the White household heads, when disaggregated by race, education level and family type. For example, mean earnings for a Black married-couple, where the family head has a college degree, was almost $8,000 a year less than the mean earnings for a similar White married-couple family.

One notable exception is in a household where no spouse is present: Black and White households where a woman is the head of the household have very similar earnings, regardless of the women's education. There was never more than a $500 difference between the mean earnings of these single women supporting families.

Quite simply, the earnings of single women are very low. For example, mean earnings of a female household head with no spouse present, was approximately $2,000 if she had no high school education. Mean earnings for a married couple where the family head had less than a high school education was $6,000, three times as much. A household head who is a single female with a high school diploma had mean earnings of about the same amount as that of the married couple family whose head had no high school education. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that there are many more Black families whose head is a single women earning these low salaries, than there are similar White families.

TABLE 3

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD BY RACE AND GENDER

	Black		White		All Races	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Less Than High School Diploma	37.0	40.0	28.0	33.0	29.0	38.0
High School Diploma	35.0	37.0	33.0	38.0	33.0	36.0
Some College	16.0	17.0	16.0	15.0	16.0	15.0
College Degree Or More	12.0	6.0	23.0	14.0	22.0	11.0

Source: Public Use Microdata Sample, New York State, 1980 Census.

TABLE 4

MEAN HOUSEHOLD EARNINGS BY EDUCATION OF HEAD AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE

1980

	No High School	Some High School	High School Degree	Some College	College Degree+
Black Households					
Married Couple	$ 7,203	$ 8,814	$11,723	$12,772	$17,518
Male-Headed, No Spouse Present	5,163	7,288	10,250	10,613	15,037
Female-Headed, No Spouse Present	2,810	2,855	5,448	7,517	11,048
White Households					
Married Couple	6,535	10,763	14,828	17,845	25,350
Male-Headed, No Spouse Present	4,607	8,356	12,321	14,405	20,928
Female-Headed, No Spouse Present	1,467	2,800	5,818	7,572	11,569
All Races					
Married Couple	6,598	10,356	14,394	17,232	24,855
Male-Headed, No Spouse Present	4,844	7,901	11,737	13,178	19,690
Female-Headed, No Spouse Present	1,756	2,625	5,565	7,347	11,487

Source: Public Use Microdata Sample, New York State, 1980 Census.

The lower education level of Blacks is insufficient to explain their lower earnings, particularly in the case of married-couple families, and families with single males as the head. Another explanation for lower earnings and poorer economic performance of Blacks has focused on the effects of structural changes in the economy and the types of jobs held by Blacks.

Occupations, Industries and Geographic Location. According to a 1985 study conducted by the Community Service Society of New York, in 1982, Whites comprised between 70% and 90% of the employees in 68% of the 192 industries with 500 or more employees in New York City. The 130 industries in which Blacks are only minimally represented constitute a large part of the City's financial, manufacturing, communications, and cultural base. These same industries, which historically have maintained barriers to minority employment, accounted for almost 60% of the private sector workforce and were among the leaders in job growth.

In 1982, in New York City, Whites represented 70% or more of the total number of employees in all of the 18 wholesale industries; 15 of the 16 financial, real estate, and insurance industries; and 14 of the 17 transportation, public utilities and communication industries (Community Service Society, 1985, pp.75-77).

In the New York SMSA, Blacks are concentrated in the occupations and industries most vulnerable to structural shifts. This is particularly true for Black males who rely more heavily on blue collar occupations and the manufacturing industries currently leaving New York City. According to Table 5, in 1980, almost half of the Black male heads of household were employed in these blue collar occupations.

While Blacks, particularly Black women, are also found in service occupations, they are mostly low-wage service jobs in health care, social services, banking, insurance, and telephone communications industries. Those service industries showing the greatest growth in New York (the information processing services and finance, insurance and real estate) rely heavily on highly trained professionals. Thus, while these service industries are showing the greatest growth in New York, Blacks continue to participate in their least desirable, least mobile jobs.

TABLE 5

OCCUPATION OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

BY RACE AND GENDER

1980

	Black		White		All Races	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Executive, Administrative, Managerial	7.85	4.31	16.01	8.32	15.10	6.83
Professionals	6.59	10.02	13.39	15.28	12.71	13.17
Technicians	2.25	3.06	2.60	2.38	2.57	2.52
Sales Workers	4.23	5.10	9.65	9.29	9.06	7.91
Administrative Support	13.76	32.25	8.14	34.73	8.69	33.02
Private Household Service	.11	4.13	.02	.82	.03	1.82
Protective Services	5.86	.96	3.75	.54	3.83	.65
Other Services	13.94	26.22	5.43	13.95	6.88	17.53
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	.80	.12	2.08	.37	1.90	.28
Craftsmen	16.05	1.62	20.64	2.16	19.87	2.22
Operators and Laborers	28.56	12.21	18.29	12.15	19.34	14.04

Source: Public Use Microdata Sample, New York State, 1980 Census.

Blacks have much lower representation in administrative and professional occupations. According to 1980 census data for New York State, White heads-of-household were twice as likely as Black heads-of-household to be in administrative and managerial occupations. White male heads-of-household were twice as likely to be in professional occupations as Black male heads-of-household, and White female heads-of-household were 50% more likely than their Black counterparts to be in professional occupations. Additionally, these Blacks were twice as likely to be in low-wage service occupations as the Whites.

Black males in New York City, unlike those throughout the nation, have had a high distribution in clerical occupations, which accounted for 20% of their work force participation in 1982. A higher proportion of Black males were employed in clerical occupations than in crafts, which historically have been a point of entry and mobility for minority males (Community Service Society, 1985, p.100). Now, many clerical functions are being carried out by the high-tech electronic equipment which underlie the growth industries in New York City. Thus, there is a clear distinction between Black participation in service occupations and their representation in the fast growing service industries.

Black and White female heads-of-household are similar in their representation in administrative support occupations. Occupational segregation by gender, as well as racial discrimination, is a problem for Black females. In 1980, fully one-third of these Black and White females were in administrative support occupations: secretaries, typists, receptionists and clerks. While these female-intensive occupations suffered less from structural change than the blue collar jobs where Black males are concentrated, they are relatively low-paying fields. Often the wages are insufficient for a single mother to keep her family out of poverty. Thus, occupational segregation contributes to the poverty of the Black females who head households.

Blacks are not in the occupations and industries where the greatest growth is expected in the New York SMSA. The service occupations within service industries are not absorbing low skilled Black men. In some instances, Blacks with higher educational levels are competing for the low skills non-supervisory jobs because of closed access to the growth industries.

Although manufacturing is not as critical in New York as in some other states, and not the primary employer of Blacks, the structural changes in the economy including the loss of manufacturing jobs, have exacerbated the employment picture for Black males.

While some service occupations are important in the employment of Blacks, they are not the growth areas which might lead to career ladder or professional opportunities. These economic changes can only fortify the barriers which Blacks already face in the labor market. A more thorough examination of these barriers follows.

Labor Market Status of Household Heads. Even when controlling for education, Black heads-of-household have higher unemployment rates than Whites. Further, although unemployment decreases with increased education, the percentage difference between the unemployment rates for similar Black and White males actually increases with further education. The 1980 unemployment rates for Black male heads-of-household ranged from 9% for those with less than a high school diploma to 3.5% for those with a college degree or more. For White males, unemployment rates ranged from 7.2% for those with less than a high school diploma to 1.4% for those with a college degree or more. As evidenced by these data, the Black males with less than a high school diploma had unemployment rates 25% higher than their White counterparts, while those Black male heads-of-household with a college degree or more had a 150% higher unemployment rate than their White counterparts.

Table 6 indicates that in 1980, unemployment rates for Black females of all ages ranged from 13.3% for those without a high school diploma to 4.4% for those with a college degree or more. The range for similar White females was 11.4% to 3.4%. It is important to note that the unemployment rates of Black female heads-of-household are the highest of all subgroups. Within this category Black females, between the ages of 18 and 24, have the highest unemployment rates of all. Even when college educated, the unemployment rate for this group reaches two digits. This subgroup of Black female heads-of-household had unemployment rates that were significantly higher (ranging from 48.8% to 12.1%) than the unemployment rates (25.2% to 3%) for young White females who are the head of their families. In fact, young Black female heads-of-household with a college education or more had an unemployment rate four times that for similar young Whites.

TABLE 6

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

BY RACE, GENDER, AGE, AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION

1980

	Black		White		All Races	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total						
Less Than High School Diploma	9.0	13.3	7.2	11.4	7.5	12.7
High School Diploma	6.2	9.8	4.4	5.9	4.6	7.2
Some College	6.5	3.4	3.0	5.2	3.4	6.3
College Degree Or More	3.5	4.4	1.4	3.4	1.4	3.6
18-24 Year Olds						
Less Than High School Diploma	31.3	48.8	15.3	25.2	16.5	37.3
High School Diploma	13.1	30.2	8.1	14.8	8.5	20.8
Some College	11.8	22.9	4.5	7.3	5.6	13.8
College Degree Or More	2.7	12.1	2.3	3.0	2.7	4.5

Source: Public Use Microdata Sample, New York State, 1980 Census.

TABLE 7

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

BY RACE, GENDER, AGE AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION

1980

	Black		White		All Races	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total						
Less Than High School Diploma	70.0	41.5	60.5	30.6	62.8	33.1
High School Diploma	87.2	62.4	84.9	61.7	85.3	61.9
Some College	89.6	72.6	89.2	69.8	89.3	69.8
College Degree Or More	92.5	82.9	91.5	75.0	91.7	76.4
18-24 Year Olds						
Less Than High School Diploma	78.7	22.4	92.5	18.8	89.7	19.9
High School Diploma	91.2	45.5	97.3	57.3	96.5	49.5
Some College	90.5	51.1	93.9	71.6	93.3	60.6
College Degree Or More	94.9	67.3	88.1	83.1	88.5	78.2

Source: Public Use Microdata Sample, New York State, 1980 Census.

Tables 7 to 9 examine the labor force participation and employment-to-population ratios of heads-of-household. In spite of high unemployment rates, when the data are controlled for gender and education, we see that Blacks have labor force participation rates as high as, or higher than, those of Whites. This is not the case when looking at total persons in the labor force instead of focusing on household heads, which will be discussed later.

Youths present a more varied picture. For males 18 to 24 years old, participation was about the same among Blacks who are heads-of-household as among Whites except for those with less than a high school diploma, where participation is less among the Blacks. For females 18 to 24 years old, the situation is reversed. Participation was lower among all those Black female heads-of-household except for those with less than a high school diploma. It is important to note that these White women were no more likely to be in the labor force than the Black women.

While Black and White women of all ages have similar participation rates, the overall participation rates for women are lower than for men. Black women heading households had participation rates ranging from 42% (for those with less than a high school education) to 83% (for those with a college degree or more). For White women the range is from 31% to 75%. The differences between men and women varied from 30 percentage points to 15 percentage points for those with more education. For the 18 to 24 year olds, however, the differences between male and female participation are even larger. This is particularly true for those with less than a high school diploma; the rates were 22% for Black females and 19% for White females in this group.

High labor force participation rates among Blacks who are household heads must compensate for high unemployment rates, because employment-to-population ratios (Table 8) are about the same or higher for Black than for White heads-of-household, again with the exception of Black 18-24 year olds. For this group employment-to-population rates are lower for Blacks than for Whites, except for Black males with a college degree or more. This is not surprising given the extremely high unemployment rates experienced by these Black heads-of-household, particularly the females, in the 18-24 age group.

To round out this picture, Table 9 presents data by household type. While the previous tables focused on household heads in either two or one-parent house-

TABLE 8

EMPLOYMENT-POPULATION RATIO FOR HOUSEHOLD HEAD

BY RACE, GENDER, AGE AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION

1980

	Black		White		All Races	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total						
Less Than High School Diploma	63.7	35.9	56.2	27.1	58.1	28.9
High School Diploma	81.8	56.3	81.2	58.1	81.3	56.6
Some College	83.8	67.0	86.5	66.1	86.2	65.3
College Degree Or More	89.2	79.3	90.2	72.4	90.3	73.6
18-24 Year Olds						
Less Than High School Diploma	54.1	11.5	78.3	14.0	74.9	12.4
High School Diploma	79.3	31.7	87.4	48.8	88.3	39.2
Some College	79.8	39.4	89.7	66.4	88.1	52.2
College Degree Or More	92.3	59.2	86.0	80.6	86.2	74.7

Source: Public Use Microdata Sample, New York State, 1980 Census.

TABLE 9

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR) AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (UR) OF HOUSEHOLDERS[1] 16 YEARS OR OVER BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE PRESENCE AND AGE OF OWN CHILDREN

1980

	Black		White		All Races	
	LFPR	UR	LFPR	UR	LFPR	UR
Married-Couple Household						
Male Householder	82.8	6.1	80.9	3.8	81.3	4.1
Female Householder	66.8	7.1	56.1	4.9	57.4	5.4
Female Householder, No Husband Present						
With Children < 6	40.8	20.1	39.7	12.8	36.4	17.4
With Children 6-17	64.5	9.3	70.5	7.1	64.6	8.2
Without Children < 18	58.2	5.3	46.8	4.8	49.4	5.2
Male Householder, No Wife Present	74.0	11.5	71.3	6.9	72.0	8.0

Source: 1980 Census of Population, Detailed Population Characteristics, New York.

Notes:
1. One person in each household is designated as the householder. In most cases, this is the person or one of the persons in whose name the home is owned or rented, and who is listed in column one of the Census questionnaire.

holds, this table distinguishes between the two kinds of households and includes categories for ages of children. Since it was taken from published census reports, it does not control for education.

The data indicate a pattern similar to the one noted previously: when focusing on heads-of-household, after controlling for family type and presence of children, Black household heads have similar or higher labor force participation rates but higher unemployment rates than White household heads. According to 1980 census data for New York State, the employment status of household heads by race, family type (married-couple, female or male householder with no spouse present), and presence of children, exhibits a pattern similar to the data on household heads by race, gender and education. Black heads-of-household participated in the labor market to the same extent as White heads-of-household despite higher unemployment rates. The one exception is Black females as heads of one-parent households with children between six and seventeen years of age. This group had lower participation rates than similar White female heads-of-household.

However, data on persons, rather than on household heads, show Blacks with lower participation rates than Whites. So, while Black heads-of-household show the same or greater labor force attachment than White heads-of-household, this is not true when focusing on the entire population of Blacks and Whites, 16 years old or over. This indicates that high unemployment has discouraged labor force participation among those who do not head households, which in turn discourages the formation of households among this group. In other words, while those Blacks who already head households show a strong commitment to the labor force in spite of high unemployment rates, there are those who have become discouraged. Further, low participation rates among Blacks are concentrated among adult males and 16 to 19 year old youth. Many of these males are no longer in the "marriageable pool". Many of these youth will be reluctant to form households, whether or not they have children.

Conclusions

In this section the Task Force explored the underlying causes of the crisis in the Black family in New York. It focused on reasons for the increase in the number of females who head households, and on the labor market problems of Blacks that contribute to this phenomenon. Our conclusions are summarized as follows:

1. The Task Force believes that the rise in female-headed families is largely the result of economic factors, particularly high joblessness among adult Black males and Black youth. While other explanations for this increase may have some merit, we feel the labor market is the primary and underlying cause of the crisis facing the Black family.

2. Lower education levels among Blacks contribute in part to their labor problems. However, even when controlling for education, Blacks had lower earnings and higher unemployment than Whites. It is our view that discrimination plays an important part in the labor market that Blacks face.

3. We found no evidence that Blacks who head households have less labor force attachment than Whites who head households. Whether controlling for gender and education, or family type and presence of children, Blacks who head households are just as likely as Whites to participate in the labor market.

4. The evidence suggests that Blacks who do not head households have less attachment to the labor force than similar Whites. This, in turn, may limit their participation in the formation of stable, two-parent families. The discouragement of this portion of the Black population, is a serious concern.

5. When focusing on women, we found that single females who head families face chronically low wages and discouragingly high unemployment rates. Further, large numbers of women who head households are in female-intensive occupations which offer few opportunities for them to earn enough income to keep their families out of poverty.

6. Black males, on the other hand, are concentrated in blue collar occupations some of which have become less important in the New York State economy. They face continuing problems of joblessness as manufacturing leaves the cities only to be replaced by service industries requiring large numbers of professional workers. The service occupations within these service industries are not absorbing the low skilled Black men. Structural shifts in the economy have exacerbated the labor problems of Blacks, particularly Black males.

Given the movement of blue collar jobs out of the central city, and the low salaries paid by many of the white collar and service jobs in which Blacks predominate, Black heads-of-household face a continuing problem of unemployment and low earnings. Therefore, policies that can benefit Blacks must not only emphasize efforts to end discrimination and increase education and training opportunities, but specific attention must be directed to the mix of jobs available in urban areas, particularly in New York City.

DISCRIMINATION

Before outlining specific recommendations for action on behalf of the Black family in New York State, the Task Force believes it is important to call attention to the impact of social attitudes and expectations on individual productivity and behavior. Discrimination is a powerful disincentive to productivity. To believe that it is possible to aspire successfully to middle class life in America is inherently a middle class assumption. To delay gratification is to believe that at some future time gratification will be achieved. To have been systematically denied participation in the middle class is to have been denied the expectation of achieving the promises of American society. This expectation becomes part of the ingredient of success which is absent from a realistic assessment of the possibilities for many Blacks in American society.

The confluence of diminished social reinforcements, particularly for Black males, educational experiences which are inadequate for either employment or interpersonal success, limited economic opportunities for Black women, and ongoing practices which limit the health, welfare and educational resources for Black children, have a steady, and pervasive impact on the hopes and expectations, and therefore, the lives, of Black families.

According to the Task Force on Poverty and Welfare (1986):

> "..race and gender-based discrimination are important causes of the low wages and weak labor market position of women and minorities. Any comprehensive approach for dealing with poverty must include a commitment to overcoming discrimination and its effects. Government has a responsibility to use its position as regulator, employer, and purchaser to influence the labor market conditions confronting disadvantaged groups" (p. 44).

In outlining the crisis which adversely affects the health and function of Black families in New York State, the Task Force recognizes the traditional, integral, and continued strengths of the infrastructure of the Black community: churches, coalitions of self-help organizations, as well as extended and augmented families. Billingsley (1987) points to the inextricable link between the "external community" and the "internal community" by pointing to "four levels of opportunity and responsibility for strengthening black families: the individual, the family, the community, and the wider society" (p.111).

The Task Force recognizes the importance of initiatives which develop from coalitions within the Black community: between the achievers and the underserved, between the leadership and the disaffected, between role models who have overcome and those facing the sacrifices required to get an education and training, while working at scarce, part-time, low-paying jobs and supporting a family. However, we also recognize the importance of having linkages in the efforts at self-help, to those powerful individuals and institutions who set the course for change in this society.

The Task Force does not view the Black families of New York State as passive victims of discrimination and limited opportunities. Given the evident truth of the stark circumstances of Black family life, the survival and successes are reasons for self pride.

Forecasts indicate that by the year 2000, one of every three American's will be non-White, and that minorities will cover a broader socioeconomic range than ever before. Clearly, simplistic treatment of the complex needs of this emerging majority will be counter-productive to the overall goal of maintaining the competitive edge of New York State in the national and international economy. The case for strengthening Black families is bound to an agenda of self interest for New York State. The demographics require that new and vigorous efforts be developed to incorporate Black youth and Black workers into the educational and economic institutions of the State.

The single most important investment by the State must be in education and training developed within the parameters of what is forecast about the economy, labor, and the population by the year 2,000, the year in which today's first graders will enter college, the work-force, or both. The anticipated changes in the

work-force indicate the need for clear symbiosis between future Black families and the future of New York State. New York State needs to focus on creating a first class workforce, through reforms in education, investments in pre-school education, support for training by the private sector, and compensatory training for those lacking the skills to compete in the labor market. These concerns are not borne of social consciousness; rather they are bottom line considerations borne of economic realities. Such is the nature of the initiatives which will help to create a context of self-sufficiency for the Black family by the year 2,000.

The Task Force realizes that, while demanding from State and Federal legislators recognition of the integral part that Blacks will play in the ongoing State and National agenda, Black families must strengthen their collective communal responses to the crisis which, left unchecked, will continue to diminish their lives. A collective voice of consensus and leadership must emanate from the many institutions which constitute the backbone of the Black community. Through these institutions we need to continually confront the real, underlying, issues for Black families, and not accept the diagnosis of rampant pathology which evolves from the analysis of those with a different perspective. Our energies, our analysis, and our examination must be focused in the direction of critical exploration and advocacy.

As Billingsley (1987) so aptly states, "Black progress is most likely to be achieved, maintained, and enhanced when Blacks themselves, through their individual and collective capacities, set the agenda and then elicit the indispensable cooperation of others who have both the responsibility and resources for effective change" (p.111).

Any study of the Black family generates a series of inter-related and inter-dependent concerns. As the preceeding narrative reveals, the fundamental belief of the Task Force is that the core of the crisis affecting the Black family - particularly family formation and family stability - is low educational achievement, high unemployment levels, and limited opportunities for access to stable jobs at adequate wages.

In formulating the recommendations which follow, the Task Force was not unmindful of the costs of implementation. However, we believe that the cost burdens of inequitable social and economic policies are far greater than the cost benefits of enlightened and inclusive policies.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Pro-family Policies

Despite the Federal government's lack of support for initiatives which address welfare reform and family support systems, the State of New York should enact the recommendations first put forth more than a decade ago by Walter Mondale, then a United States Senator.

- **This would require that a Family Impact Statement be formulated prior to the adoption of any statewide projects, programs, policies or legislation, by which an assessment of the impact of said programs on all families, including nuclear and extended Black families of various structures, will be determined.**

Discussion In Family and Nation (1986) United States Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan makes the point that the essence of a family policy is that it focuses on the outcome of other policies. He goes on to state bluntly, "family policy is no one's business at present" (p.186).

A family impact statement will list the criteria for evaluating the effect on the family of any new program, policy, legislation, or community development project. The goal of such a process is to take all necessary and affirmative action to mitigate any negative impact on family life. In this way, all public policy can function as a force to support and stabilize families.

Therefore, at the State level, any statewide initiative should first be assessed according to its potential or actual effects on the social and economic functioning of minority and non-minority families. Such policies should be designed to reinforce -- not to undermine -- existing informal support networks for families.

- **The State should further reinforce its pro-family policies by requiring that each state agency and department be required to undertake a comprehensive assessment of its current programs and policies to determine their impact on Black families. Further, recommendations should emanate from this undertaking as to specific agency initiatives for new services, policies or programs needed to strengthen the Black family, as well as**

recommendations for mitigating the negative outcome of current policies. Similarly, the State should advocate, through business and labor, and by enforcement through State agencies, support of child care initiatives and the expansion of family-oriented personnel policies (such as flexible time schedules).

- **The State of New York should indicate by policy and by example a pro-family stance. The centerpiece of the state's efforts to ensure pro-family policies must be a two-pronged concerted effort to achieve:**
  - **(a) welfare reform;**
  - **(b) full and fair employment, with emphasis on unsubsidized employment**

Welfare Reform

- **The State of New York should assume the leadership in urging passage of Congressional legislation to:**
  - **(a) modify the strict eligibility requirements for AFDC-UP to insure that most needy two-parent families qualify for benefits, and**
  - **(b) mandate the AFDC-UP program for all 50 states.**

Discussion In order to reduce the incentive for poor two-parent families to break-up because of unemployment of the breadwinner, Congress enacted the Aid to Families with Dependent Children - Unemployed Parent (AFDC-UP) Program in 1961. However, since that time, a majority (about 26) of the states - primarily in the South, have not exercised their option to adopt this program. New York State is in the vanguard of the 24 states that have maintained the AFDC-UP program since its inception. Nevertheless, this program still suffers from a number of serious deficiencies including:

(a) the 100 hour ceiling on monthly earnings which excludes numerous workers, especially Blacks, receiving poverty-level wages;

(b) the requirement that eligible workers must have worked about 1.5 years over a three-year span serves to exclude many low-income workers with erratic seasonal job histories;

(c) the requirement that to be eligible, workers must be "laid off" excludes many low-income workers who leave their jobs involuntarily (e.g., due to illness).

Because of these strict federal eligibility requirements, only about two-fifths of the jobless two-parent families in states with AFDC-UP actually receive those benefits. Consequently, contrary to the original Congressional intent, the eligibility standards for this program also provide incentives for many poor two-parent families to break up so that the female head-of-household can qualify for the regular AFDC program for poor single-parent families. In order to correct these defects, there is increasing consensus in Congress that: (a) many strict eligibility requirements must be relaxed and (b) the AFDC-UP must no longer be optional, but must be mandated for all 50 states. Thus, New York State is in a position to provide leadership by urging passage of Congressional legislation to: (a) provide assistance to poor two-parent families regardless of past work history, (b) eliminate the 100 hour per month earnings ceiling and (c) permit parents, particularly adolescent parents participating in educational or job training programs, to be eligible for benefits.

- **A system of public supports as well as education incentives must be developed for pregnant teens and teenage parents.**

Discussion For the most part, teenage parents are not able to form their own households and raise their children. Generally, teen mothers have no visible means to accomplish personal, educational or economic success. Consequently, for those teen parents receiving public assistance, the State should require that they stay in school or in some alternative learning environment. Further, current public assistance regulations should be amended. Specifically if a teenage female lives with her child in her mother's home, the head-of-household's AFDC grant is counted as income when calculating the teenager's own AFDC grant for herself and her child. This creates a further economic hardship for the household, so that frequently the teenager and child must move out in order to obtain adequate economic support. This break in social and family support militates against the teenager's ability to stay in school and work toward economic independence. We believe the teenage parent should be allowed to receive adequate financial support for herself and child while living in the family household, with proper adjustments built in for rent and utilities allowances, etc.

Full and Fair Employment Opportunities

Incentives for Business to Provide Jobs

- **The State should examine the feasibility of providing tax incentives to businesses who hire the unemployed.**

Discussion While the data indicate that the use of tax incentives to encourage employers to seek out and hire persons with a history of unemployment is not always successful, the Task Force recommends that an effort be made at the State level to develop an incentive program that will work. While there are proponents on both sides of this issue, the idea has not been tested over a long period of time. To dismiss the concept and the potential success of such an intervention, is to act on limited evidence.

- **Recruit private sector employers to provide internships to high school and college students.**

Discussion Enrolled employers will identify positions and develop internships for students to spend the spring semester and summer (January to September) with the employer. These internships must be in a career ladder, available to: students who reside in poverty areas, are in their junior or senior year of high school, and maintain a high attendance rate in school. The students will receive a small stipend from a fund provided by the employer. The fund will develop from subsidies obtained through tax incentives provided to participating employers. High school graduates and college students will be eligible for regular full-time employment. Depending on the size of the firm, employers would be required to fill a certain percentage of vacant positions from the pool of interns.

- **The Task Force believes that it is in the interest of the economic development of the State to utilize tax dollars for the research and development necessary to maintain those industries in New York State that are now considering relocation.**

Discussion Unskilled workers who are not able to secure jobs in the service occupation sector and not able to upgrade their skills through training, often become part of the hardcore unemployed. Loss of industry need not be inevitable. Increases in productivity of the available workforce can make New York State competitive in spite of wage rates that are

higher than in other parts of the country. Certain industries, manufacturing in particular, can provide a pool of job opportunities for unskilled labor, and should be given incentives to stay in New York.

Public Sector Job Incentives

- **Develop a public jobs creation program if there are not sufficient jobs for the trained work force.**

Discussion After all best efforts have been utilized to develop unsubsidized jobs and training for workers, the State should develop a public jobs creation program to carry out necessary and substantive employment, not "make-work" jobs. All efforts should be expended to build an inclusive work force with public sector or subsidized jobs available for those persons who successfully complete State training programs. It is imperative that improved employment eligibility and status be achieved through preparation for available jobs with the potential for career advancement and job security. These efforts should not be under the guise of special programs of short-term duration.

Training and Education

A variety of training and education policies are necessary in order to develop programs that will provide low skilled Blacks with an opportunity to achieve upward mobility, such as:

- **adult education programs to help those who dropped out of school or who need vocational training.**

- **training programs for dislocated workers whose skills have been made obsolete by structural changes in the economy.**

- **training programs for single parents that will lead to jobs that pay enough to make them economically self-sufficient.**

- **work experience programs for those with limited or no work experience to provide them with easier entry into the labor market.**

Discussion The single most important means to accomplish enhanced productivity in the labor force is through investment in education and training. This can only be accomplished through reforms in education,

investments in pre-school education, support for training in the private sector, and compensatory training for those who lack the skills to compete in the labor market. The State and local government should collaborate and work with private agencies to provide secondary and post secondary education, training programs, employment programs and services related to job placement, adult education, and compensatory training programs for dislocated workers whose skills have been made obsolete by structural change. The costs of such a comprehensive undertaking can be subsidized by use of Federal block grant funds.

Income

- **The Task Force believes that New York State should lobby for and encourage an increased minimum wage.**

Discussion While completion of effective training programs will enhance the prospects for the unemployed and working poor to qualify for higher paying jobs, an increased minimum wage is long overdue. At $3.35 per hour, the minimum wage has lost 27% of its purchasing power since 1981, the year when the current minimum was established. In 1987, a person working full-time, year-round, at that rate earns approximately $6,968 per year, $2,100 less than the estimated 1987 poverty threshold for a family of three.

According to Shapiro (1987), most minimum wage workers do not fit the stereotype of a teenager in his or her first job. Among the statistics which he cites, most (48%) of the 6.7 million workers who earned the minimum wage or less in 1986, were 25 years or older, and almost two-thirds (63%) were women.

There are those who argue that to increase the minimum wage is to invite fewer employment opportunities for workers dependent on minimum wage level jobs. However, the relationship between the minimum wage and unemployment is not empirically clear and caution is urged in dealing with quantitative results of studies to measure the economic loss associated with increases in the minimum wage. However, the Minimum Wage Study Commission, which was established by Congress in 1977 to analyze issues related to the minimum wage, estimated that a ten percent increase in the minimum wage is associated with a reduction in teenage unemployment opportunities by about one percent; some studies cited by the Commission found that an increase in the minimum wage has some adult disemployment

effect, while other studies which they cite, did not find a statistically significant effect (Report of the Minimum Wage Study Commission, pp. 38-44).

The current minimum wage does not provide an opportunity for families to experience the dignity to be derived from work, and working does not provide a route out of poverty. In 1985, nine million Americans worked but remained poor, with two million of those individuals working full-time year-round. The total number of working poor in the United States was 39% higher in 1985 than in 1979 (Shapiro, 1987).

It is the belief of the Task Force that the advantages of raising the minimum wage and reducing the poverty of those persons dependent upon those minimum wages, far outweigh the negative impact of possible disemployment effects.

- **A strong stand must be taken on equal access and pay equity for women in New York State. Efforts should be made to insure that women have access to traditionally male jobs and that those who are in female-intensive occupations receive salaries commensurate with the work performed.**

Discussion Our examination of the labor market shows that women, Black and White, are concentrated in low-paying, female-intensive occupations. Unlike the White families, however, Black families are much more dependent on the earning of Black women in these jobs, since Black women are more often primary earners for their families. Sex discrimination, therefore, has a more significant impact on the Black family. Anti-discrimination efforts should address this sex segregation of Black women not only in the labor market, but in training programs as well. Studies have found (Burbridge, 1986b) that training programs overwhelmingly refer Black women as trainees for secretarial and clerical positions. Further, so-called "workfare" programs, designed to get welfare recipients back into the labor market often give clients "make-work" service jobs that are of no value for their skill development.

Further, many of the female-intensive occupations offer little more than the minimum wage. Women in these jobs often earn less than males in jobs requiring similar skills. Not only would these women benefit from an increased minimum wage, discussed previously, but from consideration given to pay equity in the labor market. There is no reason for women working full-time

to subsist on the edge of poverty. This is a fact regardless of whether men are faced with the same income restrictions. However, since equally skilled men receive higher wages, the need for change is even more apparent.

The State should serve as an advocate to enable these women to earn incomes sufficient to support their families.

Affirmative Action

- **The Task Force recommends that the State establish higher goals and give greater priority in its affirmative action plan for recruitment, employment and promotion of racial minorities with special emphasis on Black males.**

- **To increase employment opportunities and career development for Blacks in State government, the State Department of Civil Service should be allowed to establish an eligibility pool of protected class members from each examination promulgated, or, be permitted to waive the one-in-three rule upon the written request of an agency head who certifies inability to meet agency goals and timetables under normal procedures.**

- **To continue to support efforts of private industry to recruit and train minorities.**

Discussion Despite the turning away from enforcement of affirmative action measures at the Federal level, the State of New York must vigorously enforce the anti-discrimination measures and affirmative action goals and timetables which are currently in place. Discrimination in the labor market, resulting in high unemployment and low earnings, is a significant problem for Blacks. Without an affirmative action policy that addresses the profit margin and bottom line of business, the effects of racism will not be overcome. The State must confirm its policy of "equality of opportunity" by tying its awarding of contracts to vendors, to their distribution of jobs to minorities.

Similarly, each State agency or department, can be directed to establish specific goals for the employment of minorities with particular emphasis on Black males. Where necessary, agency heads may elect to reclassify personnel items to the non-competitive class so ap-

pointments can be made to meet established affirmative action goals. Achievement of an agency's goals should be an integral part of the evaluation of each agency head. Those who lack progress or fail to meet 75% of the goal should be denied salary advantages, etc.; those who fail to meet the goals for a second time, should be subject to dismissal.

To succeed, an affirmative action program must be tied to a concerted effort that brings minority workers up to adequate levels of performance. In this way, the pool of eligible workers will reflect inclusive State labor policies. The success of these measures depends upon a substantial investment in education and training for jobs, with a special emphasis on those persons who live at the economic margins of society.

Human Services

- **The Task Force recommends that a youth policy initiative be developed.**

Discussion Given the current and projected demography of the State, combined with what is known about student achievement levels and school district performance levels, it seems reasonable to suggest that the State reconsider its school finance plans, and develop a policy for targeting funds and other resources to reach the most "at-risk" students throughout the State. Clearly, the basis for any youth initiative must be improved educational services.

Efforts toward these goals should include: expansion of the Headstart program to help young Black children before they encounter problems in the schools; expansion of other pre-school programs to include greater numbers of three and four year olds; development of teacher incentives to enhance teaching and learning in inner city schools; provision of adequate resources to alleviate class size problems and provide adequate technology and equipment; requirement of faculty development programs with appropriate subsidies for released time and reduced work load; provision for maintenance of resources once student gains are achieved; provision of adequate resources for counseling services to ensure exposure to both a liberal education and career exploration.

Similarly, there should be: expansion of compensatory education programs to help those currently having problems in school before they drop out; development of outreach programs to motivate those who have dropped out, to return to school; expansion of Job Corps or

related programs to provide intensive remediation and skill development for those with the most severe educational and labor market problems.

There are successful programs to be replicated. For example, Job Corps programs have found that "second chance" educational programs for youngsters "turned off" by school can be quite successful if they take place in an alternative, non-classroom environment. Training programs, like the Youth Incentive Pilot Projects (YIPP), provide teenagers with job opportunities conditional upon remaining in school. Further, alternative educational programs, based on self-paced, individualized instruction, have been shown to be effective with those who have already dropped out or who want to upgrade their skills.

The State should require local school boards and districts to develop programs in their schools which focus on the school-to-work transition. In this way youngsters can begin to recognize the possibilities and requirements for jobs and careers in the labor market.

The goal of the State should be clear: to create universal conditions for successful educational attainment for all youngsters regardless of where they live in New York. Without this as the cornerstone, all other efforts aimed at adult education and job training programs will never be sufficient to stem the flow of persons who will constitute a poorly educated, low skilled workforce in the State.

Health

- **The Task Force believes that, regardless of labor force status, all persons are entitled to health care coverage, and recommends that health benefits be maintained for workers in low wage jobs which do not provide sufficient income to purchase private coverage.**

Discussion Even with training there are barriers to employment, particularly for many women with children. There are certain disincentives for entering the labor force, such as the need for day care or child care, the loss of health benefits provided through Medicaid, etc. Benefits in welfare programs are determined by earnings, therefore, accepting part-time or full-time low-paying jobs lead to cuts in benefits.

Benefits and collateral support (such as Medicaid assisted health care) are quickly removed upon an individual's change in employment status. The Task Force recommends that the government provide health

benefits to all residents with incomes between 100% and 125% of the poverty level. This service can be provided through an insurance carrier with each participant paying according to a sliding scale based on income, unless the individual is below 125% of the poverty level. This system would supplement, not supplant, any employer-provided health coverage. For employed participants with coverage, the program would serve as a major medical carrier for those services not covered by the employer.

Foster Care

- **The Task Force recommends that: (a) special financial incentives be provided to child welfare agencies to expedite the placement of minority children in need of foster care and adoptive homes; (b) these agencies be encouraged to set first priority for placement with a member of the child's extended family network.**

Discussion Under current policies it often serves the purposes of child care agencies to keep youngsters out of placement because the agency is permitted to utilize the resources which would otherwise go to families with whom the youngsters are placed. Consequently, the Task Force recommends that the State Department of Social Services create incentives for foster care agencies, to be provided for each child it successfully places with a well-suited foster parent, within a timely and reasonable period.

The State Department of Social Services should review the criteria and practices used by local governments and foster care agencies in order to eliminate inappropriate criteria which "screen out" potential adoptive Black parents who could serve as a valuable resource in removing many Black children from their limbo status in foster care.

Similarly, formal channels should be developed in order to utilize the Black extended family as a resource for the placement of Black children by public and private adoption and foster care agencies.

Child Care

- **The Task Force believes that the State has an obligation to increase access to affordable quality child care for all parents in need of such care. This will increase the likelihood that parents will be able to, and therefore will, work.**

Discussion While this is an important issue for all parents, parents with limited financial ability are often faced with the prospect of making decisions about care for their children which, although affordable, is of limited or of questionable quality. Most parents choose not to make such a decision and, consequently, stay out of the work force, training, and educational opportunities.

The Task Force concurs with the finding of the New York State Child Care Commission (1986) that government has the responsibility through public policy, administrative procedures, and adequate funding to plan for and ensure the availability of accessible, affordable, high quality child care for families who need and want care for their children.

- **The Task Force believes that New York State can be an advocate for further changes in the tax laws which would enable families to take advantage of a refundable child care tax credit.**

Discussion If families were assured of a refund for part of their expenditures for child care, they would be in a better position to seek and secure such services. While deductions vary with income, a tax credit remains the same for everyone, regardless of the amount of tax paid. The ability of poor single heads-of-household to avail themselves of jobs or education and training programs would be greatly enhanced by such a program.

Housing

- **The Task Force recognizes that there is a critical need for an increase in the stock of available, affordable, quality housing throughout the State. Consequently, we recommend that the State develop an affordable housing program where the title of government owned land is conveyed, and tax abatements and other incentives are provided to developers and builders. The goal of the program is the construction of housing with affordable rents for families whose income is within 249% of the poverty standards for New York.**

Discussion There is a need for government supported incentives for landlords to manage all their available properties. Under this program, rents per household would be capped at 30% of household income. If rent levels exceed 30% of the tenant's income, the

owner would lose a corresponding amount of benefits. The program should provide additional benefits to builders who rehabilitate housing in inner-city neighborhoods. Any owner who abandons property in this program would be subjected to legal action to recover the cost of managing and maintaining the property.

Programs to Address Crime Related Behaviors

- **Family violence. More programs targeted to minority populations should be implemented to assist parents in developing parenting skills on how to administer effective discipline that avoids excessive punishment.**

- **School-based education programs. Health education curricula extending from elementary through high school should include teaching children how to manage hostility and aggression by nonviolent means and to develop creative methods to channel children's energies into education, work, community projects, and recreation.**

- **Mental health programs. Aggressive and antisocial behaviors in children are often associated with later delinquency and violence. Consequently, improved mental health interventions are needed. Similarly, improved mental health services are necessary to assist Black families in coping with stress.**

- **Chemical dependency. Programs to reduce chemical dependency should be incorporated into all strategies utilized to educate Black families to deal with stress.**

Community Based Initiatives

- **The Task Force recommends that specific action be taken by the State to ensure enhanced support of activities serving the Black community by community based organizations.**

Discussion Under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, 57 categorical health and social service programs were eliminated and various block grants were sent to the State for competitive distribution in these areas. Those concerned with the need for resources in disproportionately Black and poor inner city populations have felt the negative impact of this Federal initiative. Consequently, they have had to

curtail many of their activities which, until now, were considered part of the infrastructure of support in the Black community. Political concerns often dominate the outcome of the State administered block grants.

Community-based organizations have the credibility and expertise to reach those who live on the margins of society and who are most in need of public policy efforts. It is critical to reinforce the linkage through schools, senior centers, churches and other community based organizations in order to tie into the strengths and advocacy of these self-help organizations. To ignore this resource would diminish the effectiveness of whatever policies are implemented.

In many instances these organizations and their representatives can reinforce some activities that already exist. Usually, this can be accomplished in a more cost effective manner than when new initiatives are introduced by persons unfamiliar with the Black community.

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APPENDIX

TABLE A

POVERTY STATUS OF FAMILIES BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE, 1969-1979

	Number Poor[1]		Percent Poor	
Black Families	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Families	100	145	20%	26%
Married Couples	36	38	11%	12%
Female-Headed	64	107	41%	44%

	Number Poor[1]		Percent Poor	
White Families	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Families	285	253	7%	7%
Married Couples	184	141	5%	4%
Female-Headed	101	112	23%	24%

Source: 1970 and 1980 Census of Population, New York State

Notes:

1. Numbers in thousands

TABLE B

WELFARE RECIPIENCY BY POVERTY STATUS AND RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1969-1979

	Number On Public Assistance		Percent On Public Assistance	
All Black Families	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Families	100	141	20%	25%
Married Couples	33	38	10%	12%
Female-Headed	67	103	43%	42%
Poor Black Families	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Poor Families	48	82	48%	56%
Married Couples	9	11	26%	30%
Female-Headed	39	70	61%	65%
All White Families	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Families	185	233	5%	6%
Married Couples	103	126	3%	4%
Female-Headed	81	107	19%	23%
Poor White Families	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Poor Families	66	82	23%	32%
Married Couples	23	22	12%	16%
Female-Headed	43	59	43%	53%

Source: 1979 and 1980 Census of Population, New York State

Notes:
1. Numbers in thousands

TABLE C

MEDIAN INCOME OF FAMILIES BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1969-1979

	Black Families		White Families	
Family Income[1]	1969	1979	1969	1979
Total Families	497	566	4,068	3,632
Percent	100	100	100	100
Under $10,000	31	39	15	16
Under $5,000	13	19	6	5
$5,000-9,999	18	20	9	11
$10,000-19,999	38	30	29	28
10,000-14,999	21	17	13	13
15,000-19,999	17	13	16	15
$20,000 and Over	31	31	56	56
20,000-24,999	10	11	14	15
25,000-34,999	13	12	19	21
35,000-49,999	7	6	16	13
50,000+Over	1	2	7	7
Median Income	$14,438	$13,026	$22,184	$21,672

Sources: 1970 and 1980 Census of Population, New York State

Notes:

1. In constant 1979 dollars

TABLE D

MEDIAN INCOME BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1969-1979

	MEDIAN INCOME OF BLACK FAMILIES		PERCENT CHANGE
Black Families	1969[1]	1979	1969-79
Total Families	$14,438	$13,026	-10%
Couples	$17,493	$19,387	+11%
Wife in Labor Force	22,770	23,559	+ 3
Wife not in Labor Force	13,866	12,561	- 9
Female Heads	$ 8,486	$ 7,644	-10%
In Labor Force	12,326	11,091	-10
Not in Labor Force	5,867	4,664	-21
Male-Headed	$14,575	$13,150	-10%

	MEDIAN INCOME OF WHITE FAMILIES		PERCENT CHANGE
White Families	1969[1]	1979	1969-79
Total Families	$22,184	$21,672	-2%
Couples	$23,356	$23,183	-1%
Wife in Labor Force	27,154	27,178	0
Wife not in Labor Force	20,588	19,749	-4%
Female Heads	$12,575	$11,832	-6%
In Labor Force	16,260	14,308	-12%
Not in Labor Force	7,878	8,472	+8%
Male Headed	$19,475	$19,161	-2%

Sources: 1970 and 1980 Census of Population, New York State

Notes:
1. 1969 Median Income in 1979 constant dollars.

TABLE E

RATIO OF BLACK TO WHITE FAMILY INCOME,

NEW YORK STATE 1969-1979

(BLACK/WHITE MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME)

Family Structure	1969	1979
Total Families	65%	60%
Couples	75%	84%
Wife in Labor Force	84	87
Wife not in Labor Force	67	64
Female Heads	67%	65%
In Labor Force	76	78
Not in Labor Force	74	55
Male-Headed	75%	69%

Sources: 1970 and 1980 Census of Population, New York State.

TABLE F

LABOR FORCE STATUS OF FAMILY HEADS BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1970-1980

	Black Families		White Families	
All Family Heads	1970	1980	1970	1980
Total Families	498	566	4,069	3,632
In Labor Force	366	395	3,328	2,761
(Percent in Labor Force)	(73%)	(70%)	(82%)	(76%)
Employed	352	363	3,246	2,645
Unemployed	14	31	82	116
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	7.8%	2.5%	4.2%
Not in Labor Force	131	171	728	871
Husbands	1970	1980	1970	1980
Total Couples	341	322	3,638	3,164
In Labor Force	291	259	3,104	2,508
(Percent in Labor Force)	(85%)	(80%)	(85%)	(79%)
Employed	281	241	3,032	2,409
Unemployed	10	17	72	99
Unemployment Rate	3.4%	6.6%	2.3%	3.9%
Not in Labor Force	48	63	521	656
Female Heads	1970	1980	1970	1980
Female Headed	157	244	431	468
In Labor Force	75	136	224	253
(Percent in Labor Force)	(48%)	(56%)	(52%)	(54%)
Employed	71	122	215	236
Umemployed	4	14	10	17
Unemployment Rate	5.3%	10.3%	4.5%	6.7%
Not in Labor Force	83	108	207	215

TABLE G

FAMILY STRUCTURE BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1970-1980

	Black Families			
	1970		1980	
Family Structure	Number[1]	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Families	498	100	566	100
Married Couples	318	64	290	51
Female-Headed	157	31	244	43
Male-Headed	23	5	32	6

	White Families			
	1970		1980	
Family Structure	Number[1]	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Families	4,069	100	3,632	100
Married Couples	3,493	86	3,038	84
Female-Headed	431	10	468	13
Male-Headed	145	4	126	3

Source: 1970 and 1980 Census of the Population, New York State

Notes:
1. Numbers in thousands

TABLE H

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF CHILDREN BY FAMILY STRUCTURE AND RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1980

	BLACK CHILDREN IN NEW YORK STATE			
FAMILY STRUCTURE	TOTAL	OWN CHILDREN	OTHER THAN OWN	GRAND-CHILDREN
Total Under 18	100	88	12	7
Married Couples	100	91	9	5
Female-Headed	100	86	14	9
Male-Headed	100	78	22	8

	WHITE CHILDREN IN NEW YORK STATE			
FAMILY STRUCTURE	TOTAL	OWN CHILDREN	OTHER THAN OWN	GRAND-CHILDREN
Total Under 18	100	96	4	2
Married Couples	100	98	2	1
Female-Headed	100	91	9	6
Male-Headed	100	80	20	6

TABLE I

HOME OWNERSHIP OF HOUSEHOLDS BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE 1970-1980

	PERCENT WHO ARE HOMEOWNERS	
Black Households	1970	1980
Total Units	20%	22%
Inside SMSA	19	22
Central Cities	17	19
Outside Central Cities	42	44
Outside SMSA	35	38

	PERCENT WHO ARE HOMEOWNERS	
White Households	1970	1980
Total Units	51%	55%
Inside SMSA	48	53
Central Cities	30	31
Outside Central Cities	77	73
Outside SMSA	72	71

Sources: 1970 and 1980 Census of Housing, New York State

TABLE J

SELECTED HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE SMSA, 1970-1980

Selected Housing Characteristics	Black Households 1970[1]	1980	Percent Change
A) Median Income of Home Owners	$21,644	$19,900	-8%
B) Median Income of Renters	$11,883	$ 9,100	-23%
C) Median Value of Homes	$47,321	$47,700	+1%
D) Median Monthly Rent	$ 214	$ 226	+6%
E) Rent-Income Ratio	22%	29%	--

Selected Housing Characteristics	Total New York Households 1970[1]	1980	Percent Change
A) Median Income of Home Owners	$27,586	$24,900	-10%
B) Median Income of Renters	$15,491	$11,300	-27%
C) Median Value of Homes	$60,265	$59,900	-1%
D) Median Monthly Rent	$ 248	$ 257	+4%
E) Rent-Income Ratio	20%	27%	--

Source: Annual Housing Survey: 1980-New York State SMSA

Notes:
1. In constant 1980 dollars

TABLE K

PUBLICLY-SUPPORTED HOUSING BY RACE,

NEW YORK STATE SMSA, 1980

	BLACK HOUSEHOLDS		TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	
Type of Housing	Number[1]	Percent	Number[1]	Percent
Total Rental	561	100	2,270	100
Private Housing	406	72	1,945	86
Publicly-Supported	155	28	325	14
Public Housing	120	22	218	10
Subsidized Rent, Private	35	6	107	4

Source: Annual Housing Survey 1980, New York State SMSA

Notes:
1. Numbers in thousands